

MANUAL OF
CHURCH POLITY.

HOPKINS

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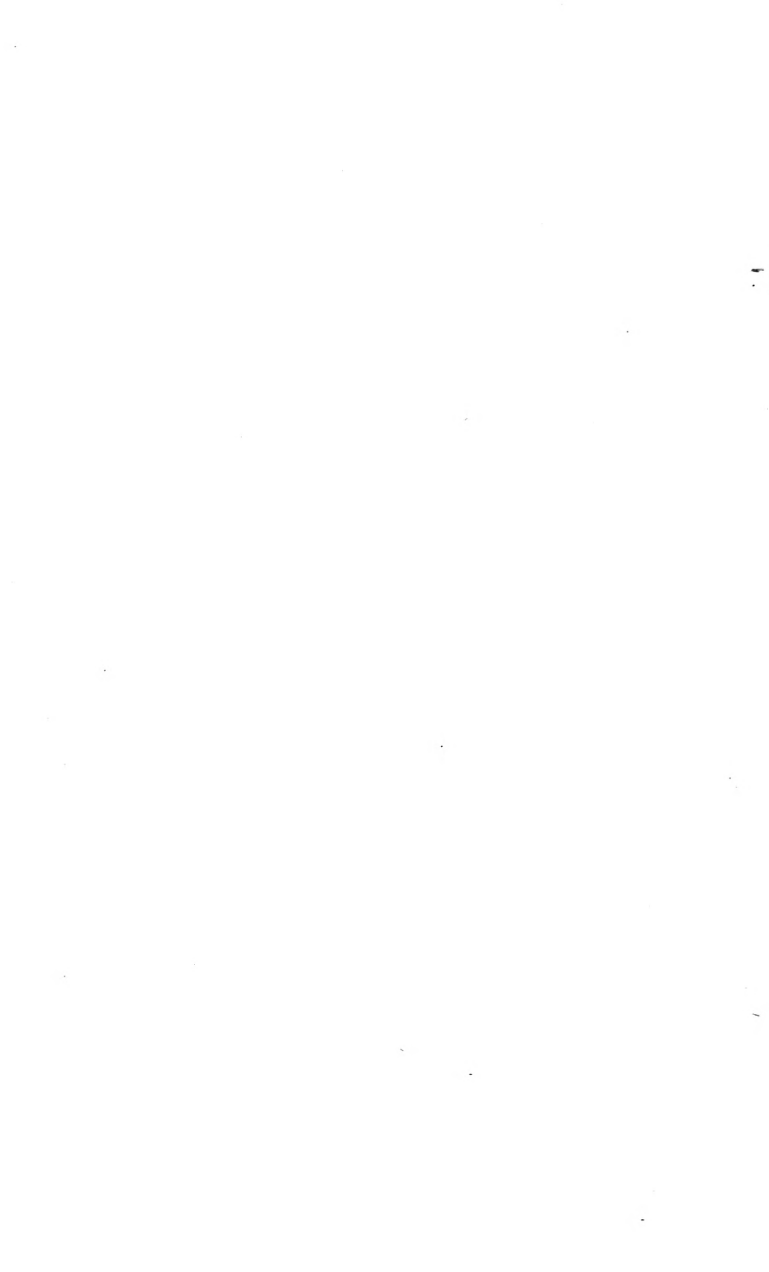
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Manual of church polity

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MANUAL

OF

CHURCH POLITY,

BY


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AUBURN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY.

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“ And, therefore, it is good we return unto the ancient bonds of unity in the Church of God, which was one faith, one baptism, and not one hierarchy, one discipline: and that we observe the league of Christians, as it is penned by our Savior, which is, in *substance* of doctrine, this: *He that is not with us, is against us*; but in things indifferent, and only of circumstance, this: *He that is not against us, is with us*. In these things, so as the general rules be observed, that Christ’s flock be fed, that there be a succession in bishops and ministers, which are the prophets of the New Testament, that those that preach the Gospel live of the Gospel, that all things tend to edification, that all things be done in order and decency, and the like; the rest is left to the holy wisdom and spiritual discretion of the master builders and inferior builders in Christ’s Church, as it is excellently alluded by that Father who noted that Christ’s garment was without seam, and yet the church’s garment was of diverse colors; and, thereupon, setteth down for a rule, *in veste varietas sit, scissura non sit*.”

LORD BACON, *on the Pacification of the Church*.

ADVERTISEMENT.

The following notes contain the substance of the course of instruction on Church Polity given to the students in Auburn Theological Seminary, and are now published at their repeated request, and, primarily, for their convenience.

They make no pretence, in their present compendious form, to be a complete or exhaustive discussion of the subject; yet, it is believed, they take up every point of importance to a student for the Presbyterian ministry. They may, possibly, be found of use to those who have already completed their preparation, and entered upon their work, as, for example, in the examination of candidates for licensure or ordination. In some directions, they necessarily take the form of controversy; but their object is irenic and not polemic. The writer does not expect that all, even of his own immediate brethren, will concur in all his views. He has, at least, desired to say nothing at variance with the spirit of Christian charity.

So far as he is aware, no manual suitable to the purposes above mentioned is in existence. The admirable treatise of Dr. Jacob — admirable for its fullness, learning and catholicity of spirit — was designed as “a study for the present crisis in the Church of England.” It, of course, includes no discussion of the polity of the Presbyterian Church, and leaves aside many topics which are necessary to be included in a study by candidates for the Presbyterian ministry.

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NOTES ON CHURCH POLITY.

SEC. I. — NATURE AND VALUE OF THE STUDY.

Church polity has for its object the study of the constitution of the Christian Church, as laid down in the New Testament, with those modifications or developments to which it has since been subject, together with a defense of some particular system of church government, as against all others. It relates to the external form and order of the church, and not to her doctrine or life. It may, therefore, be admitted to be essentially a sectarian study, and finds its apology in the divided condition of the Christian Church. If all Christians, or even all Protestant Christians, constituted one communion, there would be little or no occasion for this study. At present, it serves to supply a magazine of arms to each particular sect, by which it may be in a condition to defend itself, and assail all other denominations.

This study, therefore, belongs, incidentally, to the present imperfect and distracted state of the church; and, in her highest ideal condition, may be expected to become needless and obsolete. While this condition lasts, however, church polity must be regarded as an indispensable part of the preparation for the work of the ministry.

Leaving other churches to do in this department what their views of truth and duty dictate, it devolves on us

to justify, from Scripture and history, that form of church government and order we, ourselves, adopt.

The study in our hands is a purely defensive method; the Presbyterian Church makes no claim to any exclusive divine right; we hold that only the general principles of church polity are laid down in the Scriptures, and that, consistently with these, each church may adopt its own order, and ordain rites and ceremonies according to the demands of different times and places. We freely admit that there are true Churches of Christ organized differently from our own, with a different constitution and forms of worship. We refuse, so far as in us lies, to sunder the bonds of unity that should unite all Christians, for any such immaterial differences; but we are met by others, who insist on an exclusive divine right for themselves. We are obliged, therefore, out of self-respect and fidelity to Scriptural and historical truth, to stand in defense of our church order, to show its original warrant, its reasonableness and expediency, and, by consequence, to disprove the exclusive claims set up by others.

This argument, therefore, is a matter of necessity with us, and not of choice; we would gladly welcome the day when all polemical activity in this line shall cease, and give way to mutual toleration respecting outward order and things indifferent between the various parts of the Christian body. "Polemical theology," an odious solecism, though at present an unhappy necessity, is peculiarly odious when it exhibits Christians arrayed in hostile camps, and exhausting their energies in mutual struggles, in regard to bishops, sacraments and prayers. We may lay down, then, the following definition: that "church polity, as a study, includes a view of the organ-

ization, worship and discipline proper to the Church of Christ, with the objections to other systems, and a justification of our own."

SEC. II. — MEANING OF THE WORD CHURCH IN THE NEW TESTAMENT.

The English word Church is probably derived from the Greek *κῆρυξ* *ὄμιλος*. Its Greek equivalent is *ἐκκλησία*, from *ἐκκαλεῖν*, to call out, or summon together; the *ἐκκλησία* is the aggregate of those who are called and meet together; in classic usage, it designated the public assembly of the people of Athens, in the Prytaneum, or town hall. (Grote: IV, 138.) In the Gospels, the word *ἐκκλησία* occurs in only two places, viz.: Matt.: XVI, 18; "*thou art Peter, and on this rock I will build μου την ἐκκλησίαν,*" where the church universal is evidently intended; and Matt.: XVIII, 17; "*If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it (τη ἐκκλησία) to the church;*" referring to a particular congregation. In the Acts and Epistles, *ἐκκλησία* occurs often, and in four different senses, viz.:

1. Of a particular or local Christian society; Col.: IV, 15; "*Nymphs and the church,*" &c.
2. Of the whole body of Christians in a place; Col.: IV, 16; "*The church of the Laodiceans.*"
3. Of the whole visible church; 1 Cor.: XII, 28; "*God hath set some in the church,*" &c.; certainly, not in the spiritual church, nor in any one local society.
4. The whole spiritual or true church of sanctified men; Col.: I, 18; "*He is the head of the whole body, the church.*"

Ecclesia is never used in the New Testament for *house of worship*. (See 1 Cor.: XIV, 34; Acts: XIX, 37.) *The usual term* for the place of Christian worship, in the New Testament, is *οἶκος*: Acts: II, 46; "*They*

broke their bread $\alpha\iota\tau\ \delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omicron\upsilon\delta\varsigma$ ” — i. e., in private houses. But $\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\varsigma$ has a more specific meaning than this. It does not so much signify a *house*, for which $\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\iota\alpha$ is the proper term, as an apartment or hall appropriated to some special purpose, usually a religious purpose. The $\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omicron\varsigma$, in apostolic usage, was the room in a private house—the private chapel or room of prayer, in which Christians were accustomed to meet for worship. It was not uncommon, in Oriental houses of the better class, to have a “large upper room,” not occupied by the family, but reserved for social or religious occasions; a certain number of these $\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, in Jerusalem, were used as places for Christian meetings. Thus, when it is said, in Acts: v, 42, that the apostles *preached Christ daily in every house* ($\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omicron\upsilon$), the meaning is, not that they went along from house to house making family visits, but that they met regularly with the disciples in the several $\alpha\iota\kappa\omicron\upsilon\varsigma$, or “worship rooms,” used for that purpose. So, when it is said that Paul “*entered every house*” ($\delta\acute{\iota}\kappa\omicron\upsilon$), &c., the reference is, not to private houses promiscuously, but to those private chapels in which Christians could be found assembled for worship; *oikos*, accordingly, continued for a long time to be the name by which the Christian place of worship was designated. In classic usage, it also signified the house of a god, a temple. In Palestine, it was also called the synagogue. Thus, the Apostle James reproves the Jewish Christians for discriminating improperly among those who came into their “synagogue.”*

Ecclesia is never used for *national churches*, as Church of England; nor for *denominational churches*, as Epis-

* In the Attic testamentary law, *oikos* was also distinguished from *oikia*; the former meaning all the property left at a person's death; the latter, the dwelling house only. (Vide Liddell and Scott, *sub voce*)

copalian, Presbyterian, &c. As applied to a body of visible believers, it ordinarily includes all the Christians in a place, whether it were large or small. All the disciples in Antioch constituted "the church" in Antioch; so of Ephesus, Jerusalem, &c. This, in an ideally perfect condition of Christianity, approaching that of the Apostolic Age, would be the proper and Scriptural use of the term now; all the Christians in New York, e. g., would constitute "the church in New York," and would be distinguished only by non-essential criteria, implying no breach of the unity of the body.

SEC. III. — REASONS FOR THE BEING OF A CHURCH.

The church under the New Testament is the Church of Christ; He said, I *will* build MY church. The Jewish Church was national; all Jews were members of it by the fact of birth, irrespective of character; the Christian Church is universal, and at the same time eclectic; all those of every nation who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ are members of it, and none others; it is, therefore, a select society, formed out of the world, according to John XVII, on the principle of a common faith and mutual sympathies. Such a society must become visible and take on outward form and organization, general or particular, for reasons found in nature of Christianity itself, viz.:

I. All Christians have a sacred literature in common; the New Testament contains their law, faith, example, mutual relations, &c.; any number of men having such reasons for union are necessarily led to express it, more or less positively, by outward organization. Men may hold opinions in common on philosophy, history, morals, or trade, without feeling impelled to enter into any out

ward relations with each other; but those who recognize the same law, look to the same example, acknowledge the same teacher, call themselves by the same name, and assume the same obligations, are compelled, by the necessities of the case, to recognize each other, in a larger or more restricted sense, as members of the same society.

II. Christianity contemplates, not merely individual worship, but worship in common. All religions are more or less social; Christianity is eminently social. Its most elementary utterance is "*our* Father." All the parts of its worship, such as reading, prayer, praise and preaching are social acts. In order to such worship, there must be Christian *societies* which will provide for times, places, conveniences, &c. The only agency that can do this is the church.

III. Christianity has certain positive institutions which imply and require society. Baptism is the ordinance by which those previously strangers are to be recognized as Christians; it presupposes, therefore, a church already in being. The Lord's Supper is a social act by which Christians recognize their family relationship, and their obligations to each other, and their common Lord; solitary believers cannot celebrate the Lord's Supper.

IV. Christianity requires a ministry — an order of men trained and set apart to be stewards of the mysteries of the Gospel, interpreters of Scripture and ambassadors of Christ. Such an order cannot be self-originated; isolated men will not volunteer for the work, nor could they possess credentials of their authority and fitness. The rule is, *how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?* The ministry must spring from the church, and the church must authenticate their mission and provide for their support.

V. Christianity is a missionary religion, to be propagated from heart to heart, and from land to land, by suitable methods — by the living preacher, by the translation and diffusion of the Scriptures, and by the establishment of new centres of operation as it extends. The last command of Christ pledged his disciples to this work. But this requires an organization to rest upon, the selection of proper agents, their designation to their work, some provision for their support, and for such other expenses as are incidental to the enterprise. Nothing of this is possible without organization; the missionary spirit must become concrete and solid in a society devoting itself to such ends — that is, a church. There have been cases of solitary missionary enterprise, which sprung only indirectly from the church; these have proved wholly abortive; all persistent and successful missionary work has been, in some form, originated and directed by the church. This was true of the first mission from Antioch, and of all the missions by which Europe was converted during the Middle Ages, as it is also of all modern missions.

VI. Christians are, by supposition and requirement, saints — free, not only from the gross vices of heathenism, but exemplary in moral character, just, temperate, truthful, &c. ; a person of opposite character, making pretence of Christianity, is to be disowned; this implies the exercise of discipline, and the exclusion of the unworthy or offending party. But, in order to the exclusion of any, there must be the inclusion of suitable and worthy persons as Christians — in other words, a Christian society; therefore, Jesus said: “*If he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church.*”

VII. Sympathy of opinion and the force of outward

circumstances will give this organic union of Christians with each other, a larger or more limited scope. All Christian believers throughout the world constitute one visible church; all believers interpreting the Scriptures alike, and accepting the same ritual and discipline, may constitute a sectarian church; all the Christians, or a majority of them, in a province or kingdom may compose a national church; this may be, at the same time, sectarian, as "*The Church of England.*" Finally, all the Christians, whose convenience or preferences lead to it, may unite together for the purposes of worship, and constitute a local church. Thus, through the necessary operation of Christianity on the human mind, and with no express command enjoining it, Christian Churches spontaneously grow up, and we have, 1. The universal church of Christ's professed disciples; 2. The national or sectarian church; 3. The particular church or local Christian society.

SEC. IV. — THE UNIVERSAL CHURCH — ITS DEFINITION AND MARKS.

"The Universal Church consists of all those persons, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of obedience to His laws." (Form of Gov't, ch. 2.)

This definition includes all nominal Christians — Romish, Greek and Protestant — since they all make the profession required. Neither orthodoxy of faith, nor Scripturalness of order, or worship, enter into the definition. In this broadest sense, all who call themselves "Christians" are members of the church.

This church is distinguished by certain marks or "notes," so called, viz. :

1. It IS ONE — “*The Universal Church*” — implying that there are not two or more Churches of Christ, but one only.

2. It is catholic, not being confined to one nation, like the Jewish Church, but diffused among all nations.

3. It is holy — i. e., as distinguished from any profane or secular society — being consecrated to the worship of a holy God, and enjoining holiness on its members, in conformity with His laws.

4. It is apostolic, as being conformed to the apostles’ doctrine, or organized according to apostolic instructions, or founded on apostolic succession and traditions.

Instead of these notes, Calvin and other Protestant writers lay down three criteria by which the true Church of Christ may be distinguished from all counterfeits, viz. :

1. By the pure preaching of the Word. (Eph. : II, 11 ; Acts : II, 42 ; Epistles to Timothy, *passim*.)

2. By the proper administration of the Sacraments. (Matt. : XXVIII, 19. 1 Cor. : XI, 23.)

3. By the exercise of Scriptural discipline. (Matt. : XVIII, 15–17.)

Where these three things are found, viz., Scriptural preaching, ordinances, and discipline, it may easily be admitted there is a Christian Church ; but is not so easy to say whether each one of these enters essentially into the definition. Even evangelical Protestants would differ considerably as to what is implied in the pure preaching of the Word, the due administration of Sacraments, and the exercise of Scriptural discipline. Discipline is one thing in a Presbyterian and another thing in an Episcopal Church. In the Anglican Church, there is no discipline whatever ; in the American Episcopal Church but little. Shall we, for these reasons, deny that

they are true Churches of Christ? The due administration of the Sacraments is very differently understood in Baptist and in Pædobaptist Churches.

According to the Episcopal theory, all these marks are insufficient or false; a true Christian Church is one in which "the succession of bishops has been preserved from the time of the apostles. This makes the Roman and Greek Communion true Churches of Christ, and vitiates the claim of all Protestant bodies, to whose constitution that element is wanting, to make a part of the church. We must infer that there is no precise or infallible criterion, by which a true church can be distinguished from a false one. Whether the Greek, Roman, Socinian bodies, &c., belong to the true Church of Christ will be affirmed or denied, as the tests are more strictly or more loosely applied. Even if we lay down that all are members of the Universal Church who agree in holding the fundamental truths of the Gospel, the question returns, *what truths are fundamental?* Does the platform of the Evangelical Alliance contain them? Neither Richard Baxter nor Augustus Neander could have been members of that body; neither of them would admit anything to be fundamental outside the affirmations of the apostles' creed. The truth lies somewhere between the extremes of laxity and of exclusiveness. In regard to some so called churches, however, there is no danger of mistake. "The catholic or Universal Church has been sometimes more, sometimes less, visible; and particular churches, which are members thereof, are more or less pure, according as the doctrine of the Gospel is taught and embraced, and public worship performed more or less purely in them. The purest churches under Heaven are subject both to mixture (in their membership) and

error (in their faith and worship), and some have so degenerated as to become no Churches of Christ, but Synagogues of Satan.* (Conf. of Faith: xxv, 4, 5.)

It may be added that the Universal Church is also distinguished as visible and invisible, militant and triumphant.

By the Romish and by a part of the Episcopal Church, it is denied that there is any distinction between the invisible and the visible church; the two are held to be identical — i. e., all who abide in communion with the true visible church, of which St. Peter is the head, or which enjoys a ministry derived by an unbroken succession of bishops from the apostles, are also members of the true spiritual church. Their vital relation to Christ is determined by their outward relation to the church. But most Protestants distinguish between the visible church of Christ's professed disciples, and that true spiritual church of penitent and believing souls, which exists invisibly within it. The distinction between the church as *militant*, in its present earthly condition, and *triumphant*, in the persons of all the redeemed in Heaven, is universally admitted.

* NOTE.— The more advanced English reformers denied that the Romish Church was catholic, or that the mere succession of bishops makes a true church. Arch-deacon Philpott said, when on trial, that the church of which he was a member would be catholic, if only ten persons belonged to it, because it agreed with the true Catholic Church which the apostles planted. Bishop Barlow, the consecrator of Arch-bishop Parker, said, in a sermon, that "wheresoever two or three simple persons, as cobblers or weavers, are in company, and elected in the name of God, there is the true Church of God." This corresponds with the saying of Tertullian, "*ubi tres, licet laici, ibi ecclesia.*" See Hunt's History of Religious Thought in England: 1, 36.

SEC. V. — SUBSTANCE OF THE “PRELIMINARY PRINCIPLES” TO THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH.

The “*preliminary principles*,” laid at the foundation of American Presbyterianism, define with great force and precision the true doctrine of Christian liberty, and the right relations of church and state, as follows, viz. :

1. *Article first* affirms the great “formal principle” of Protestantism, that “the Word of God is the only infallible rule of faith and practice;” maintains the right of private judgment in the things of religion, and discards the idea of any other union of church and state than such as consists in the government’s extending just and equal protection to all forms of worship.

2. Subject to these conditions, the *second article* claims for each church the right of shaping its own internal polity, according to the appointment of Christ, and fixing its own terms of communion. As no person, therefore, can be lawfully compelled, against his own convictions, to join or commune with any church, so no person can intrude himself into membership with any church, without complying with its terms of communion.

3. The *third article* is directed against Independency and Quakerism, which either reject the Sacraments, or discard the office of rulers in the church, whose right and duty it is to preach the Gospel, administer ordinances, and maintain discipline.

4. The *fourth article* is directed against Antinomianism, and maintains that “the end and touchstone of doctrine is the promotion of holiness.” This was rendered necessary by the existence of certain sects, who held that mere faith was sufficient for salvation, and that, under the

Gospel, men were set free from the restraints of the moral law.

5. In accordance with this principle, the *fifth article* maintains that all church teachers should be sound in the faith, but admits that there are doctrines and forms in regard to which good men may differ; in respect to these, Christians should exercise mutual forbearance. The spirit of this article requires that all church teachers should be held to a *bona fide* subscription to the standards of the church, while private members should be required to assent only to the most necessary and fundamental doctrines of the Christian faith. In respect to all things non-essential, whether in doctrine or worship, Christians should respect each other's honest convictions, and exercise a liberal toleration.

6. The *sixth article*, while claiming that the character and qualifications of church officers, as well as the method of their ordination, are laid down in the Scriptures, affirms that the election of their religious teachers and rulers resides in each Christian society. This, on the one hand, suggests that the Presbyterian form of church government is of divine warrant, and, on the other, forbids any such intrusion of ministers upon congregations against their will, as has been practiced in all Erastian Churches, including the Kirk of Scotland.

7. As the sixth article forbids usurpation in the house of God by the state, so the *seventh* forbids usurpation of power by the church herself. No church has the right to exercise any legislative power, properly so called, but merely to interpret and apply Christ's laws. He is the only law-giver in the church. No church action is legitimate except such as is founded on the revealed will of God; nor can any church judicatory pretend to make

laws to bind the conscience, by virtue of their own authority. This article is directed against the claim of certain churches to impose indifferent customs in respect to vestments, ceremonies, &c., on the conscience of their ministers, as a condition of their being permitted to preach the Gospel. The article admits that, even in undertaking to interpret Christ's laws, synods and councils are liable to err, yet holds that the liability is much less than in their assuming to make laws by their own authority. The inspired Canon, for example, "*let all things (in worship) be done decently and in order,*" may be misinterpreted so as to require ministers to pray in a surplice, or use the sign of the cross in baptism; but the liability to error is not so grave as if a church should claim the right, by infallible authority, to establish new articles of faith.

8. The *eighth* and last article declares, that "a steadfast adherence to these Scriptural and rational principles will contribute to the glory and happiness of any church; and, that since ecclesiastical discipline must be purely moral and spiritual in its object, and not attended with any civil effects, it can derive no force whatever but from its own justice, the approbation of an impartial public, and the countenance and blessing of the Great Head of the church."

SEC. VI. — THEORIES OF THE RELATION BETWEEN CHURCH AND STATE.

In all countries whose national churches formerly made, or at present make, a part of the Romish Church, the doctrine prevails that the state is bound to exercise its power for the defense and promotion of the true faith, and for the suppression or, at least, the discouragement

of all dissent. This view exists under various modifications.

1. The Romish theory is that the Pope, as the vicar of Christ, is the absolute spiritual ruler of this world, and that every human government is bound to support the Papal, and suppress every other church. His temporal authority is claimed to extend to all countries and provinces that have been expressly made over to St. Peter, and to all islands, absolutely. The forged donation of Constantine having assigned Sicily and Sardinia to Sylvester, Bishop of Rome, and his successors, it was argued by the Canonists that this is a property of all islands, that they belong to the Pope.

2. The Anglican theory, as expounded by Hooker, Burke, Mr. Gladstone, and others, is, that church and state are only one society under different names, and, in order to the perfection of both, should be strictly identified. "The church and commonwealth are, therefore, personally, one society, which is called 'Commonwealth,' as living under a certain secular law and regimen; 'church,' as living under the spiritual law of Christ." (Eccles. Pol. : VIII, 409.) "In a Christian Commonwealth, the church and the state are one and the same thing, being different integral parts of the same whole." (Edmund Burke : II, 454.) "The state, in the exercise of its sovereignty, adopts for itself the true religion, or declares itself Christian. By so doing, it becomes a part of Christ's Holy Catholic Church, or rather transformed into it. Where the nation and government are avowedly and essentially Christian, the state or nation is virtually the church." (Dr. Thomas Arnold, Miscel. : p. 457.)

It should be added, that in the time of Hooker there were no dissenters, and that both Burke and Arnold rec-

ognize dissenters (except Unitarians) as making part of the church, and equally identified with the state. It belongs to this theory that the church has authority to ordain rites and ceremonies, and require conformity to them, under penalties to be inflicted by the state. The laws of the land become the laws of God, and the same persons are both ecclesiastical and civil rulers. This was also the theory of the Puritan Fathers of Massachusetts, and of the English Presbyterians, and was incorporated in the "Confession" of the Westminster Assembly.

3. Bishop Warburton's view varied from this, in holding that church and state are essentially distinct and independent societies, and, for their mutual advantage, must be intimately allied — the church exerting her influence in favor of the government; the government protecting and endowing the church. The results of this alliance are a settled maintenance of the clergy and their dependence on the state; the ecclesiastical supremacy of the sovereign, and the right of churchmen to a share in the legislature. It proposed to include, in England, the establishment of Episcopacy, the toleration of dissenters, and their exclusion from Parliament.

This was also Calvin's theory of the proper relation between church and state, as applied under his own administration at Geneva. The two were distinct from each other, but should be intimately connected and mutually co-operative, for a common end, viz.: The realization of the kingdom of God in a theocratic commonwealth. The church was to infuse a religious spirit into the state: the state was to uphold and foster the church. These views, in general, are denominated Erastian, from Erastus (Lieber), a Swiss Jurist of the 16th century (died at Basle, 1583), who advocated, in an elaborate

treatise, a union of church and state. His view, more specifically stated, was, that no form of church polity is laid down in the Scriptures; no one church possesses a divine sanction, rather than another; and it is the duty of the civil magistrate in each country to establish the religion of the majority (being Christian) as the religion of the state, with all the advantages that belong to an establishment, leaving to dissenters a bare toleration.

4. The theory of the Presbyterian Church and of other Protestant bodies in America is, that the province of the church and of the state is entirely distinct; each church being independently organized for its own ends, within and separate from the organization of the state. This system alone preserves the freedom of the one, maintains the equity and impartiality of the other, and secures the equal rights of all peaceable citizens, irrespective of their creed, government or worship. Every "Erastian" system, under whatever pretence of defending and fostering the church, really degrades and enslaves her, and makes her an instrument for oppressing and persecuting others.

SEC. VII. — ORIGIN OF DENOMINATIONAL CHURCHES.

No such thing as sectarian, or "denominational" churches — i. e., churches organized separately within the church catholic, on the basis of sympathy in respect either to doctrine or practice — was known in the Apostolic Age, nor until the middle of the third century. The first instance of a "denomination" was the Novatian Church, originating A. D. 251, and deriving its name from Novatus, a Presbyter and schismatical Bishop of Rome. This being the first instance of an organized schism, it may be interesting to inquire into its legitimacy. Schism is a breach of unity in the church. It

is strongly deprecated by the apostles and the early fathers, particularly Ignatius, Clement and Cyprian. A schism may be either elementary, as a violent quarrel or party difference among Christians, or organized. In neither case can it exist without sin; but it will always be a question at whose door the sin lies. Allegiance to Christ is the primary law of the church. Truth is first, unity afterwards: "*first pure, then peaceable.*" Where unity with the body of the church cannot be maintained, consistently with obedience to Christ, separation is a duty, not a sin, and the guilt of schism rests on those who, by violating Christ's laws, make such separation necessary.

Where a church is rent into two, therefore, the majority may be the schismatical body. Take the case of the English Non-conformists, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth. Christ has nowhere required that ministers shall preach in surplices, or sign a child with the cross in baptism, or join parties in marriage by means of a ring. When the State Church insisted on these usages, and forbade any one to preach the Gospel who dispensed with them, the Puritans, who regarded them as symbols of Popery, felt bound, in loyalty to Christ, to separate from the Establishment. In their view, the Bishops were guilty of the schism, and not they.

The Bishops, however, maintained that these usages being in themselves indifferent, the church had the right to enjoin them, in order to uniformity and decorum of worship, and that those were the schismatics who, out of a superstitious regard to trifles, refused to yield to her authority.

The legitimacy of a separation from the church must depend on the question of its necessity; and of this neces-

sity an enlightened conscience must be the judge. To separate out of a morbid sensitiveness in regard to things in themselves unessential, such as the mode of baptism, singing of hymns, use of organs, &c., cannot be justified on the ground of conscience, since Christians are bound to have a conscience, not merely sensitive, but sound and enlightened.

The history of the Novatian schism is considerably obscure. It is represented by the "Catholic" writers who were engaged in the struggle (Cyprian of Carthage, and Cornelius of Rome), as having grown out of the ambition of turbulent Presbyters, taking occasion of the discipline of the church towards lapsed persons; but there are many circumstances to show that it originated in the resistance of the Presbyters to the organizing and encroaching Episcopal power, which was just then growing up in Carthage and Rome. As a question about discipline, the separation of the Novatians may have been unjustifiable; as a struggle for the independence of the churches, and the rights of the Presbyters, against a usurping Episcopacy, it may have been legitimate and necessary. The true schismatics may have been Cyprian, Cornelius and their party, and not the Novatians. At all events, this church, founded on rigid principles of discipline, and embracing the more earnest and Puritanic Christians, survived, with high reputation, for several centuries.

That the multiplication of sects by repeated schisms, since the Reformation, has involved grievous sin on one side or the other, or on both, cannot be doubted.

The Roman Catholic Church, though embracing all western Christendom, became schismatical, when, by corruptions in government and worship, it departed so

far from the purity of the church catholic, as to oblige those recognizing the supreme authority of the Scriptures to separate from it. The old catholics now claim, that by accepting the blasphemous dogma of the Papal infallibility, the Romish Church has forfeited her claim to be regarded as catholic, and has become a sect. The Romish and the Greek Churches mutually stigmatize and excommunicate each other as schismatical.

The Russian Greek Church regards the Romish Church as having become schismatical from A. D. 869, when it rejected the Council of Constantinople, which had endorsed Photius as Patriarch, and laid down a basis for the reconciliation of the churches.

The various Protestant denominations arose, of course, subsequent to the Reformation. The Episcopal Church having broken off from communion with Rome, which it acknowledges to be a true church, is the sect of a sect. The Presbyterians, Independents, Baptists and Methodists, subsequently broke off from the Church of England, and are equally sectarian.

All these, according to the definition previously given, make a part of the catholic or universal church; but each of them is schismatical if, and so far as, by corruptions in doctrine or worship, or unscriptural terms of communion, it breaks the unity of the spirit, and makes separation by others a duty.

SEC. VIII. — DEFINITION OF A PARTICULAR CHURCH.

“A particular church consists of (1) a number of professing Christians, together with (2) their offspring, (3) voluntarily associated together (4) for divine worship and Godly living, (5) agreeable to the Holy Scriptures,

(6) and submitting to a certain form of government.” (Form of Gov. : I, 1.)

This definition includes the statement that the children of professing Christians are members of the particular church to which their parents belong; but it also affirms that such a church consists of persons “*voluntarily associated together.*” These two propositions are mutually contradictory. The children have never “voluntarily associated” themselves with their parents for the objects named. Indeed, on this theory, if we suppose a community to exist in which the same families have resided from the organization of the church, and have composed its membership, no members of it except the very first ever did “voluntarily associate” themselves together. The present children of those families are members because their parents were members, and they, because their parents, &c.

In what sense then are children members of the church? The Westminster symbols know but one class of church members. They are all bound by the same obligations, and subject to the same discipline. On condition only of knowledge to discern the Lord’s body, and freedom from scandal, every church member, young or old, is bound to perform all the duties implied in the relation; and, in particular to come to the Lord’s Supper, and is liable to discipline for neglecting it.

This is the theory of all Pædobaptist Churches — a theory which in Great Britain and on the Continent of Europe is carried out in practice. In this country, on the other hand, the Presbyterian and Congregational practice is directly at variance with the theory. Still holding to the definition which makes the children of believing parents members with them of the same par-

ticular church, we do in no wise treat them as such. Their membership is connected neither with privilege, duty, nor discipline. When any of them propose to come for the first time to the Lord's table, we regard and speak of them as "*joining the church.*" We receive them in no other way than we receive the children of heathen men and publicans. If they have a satisfactory religious experience to relate, and give credible evidence of a change of heart, they are received. If otherwise, their supposed birth-right membership counts for nothing.

It would seem proper, therefore, either to amend the definition, or to conform our practice to it. If we insist on infant church membership, then we should treat the children of believers as members of the same church with their parents; and, on their arriving at the suitable age, should require of them the same duties and subject them to the same discipline. If we wholly refuse the practical recognition of infant membership, we should admit the definition to be erroneous.

I suggest the latter alternative as the true solution. Children are not members of the particular church to which their parents belong, until they voluntarily associate themselves to it. They are members of the "church catholic," in the sense already explained — i. e., they are Christians in the general sense, because they are born within the nominal Christian Church. They are neither Jews, Pagans, nor Mohanmedans. Their parents, though perhaps far from possessing a Christian character, do, in a general way, "make profession of the holy religion of Christ." Ask them what religion they are of, and they will say, "the Christian religion." If they affirm the

contrary, of course they are to be regarded as outside the Catholic Church, the same as Pagans.*

SEC. IX. — ORGANIZATION AND MINISTRY OF THE FIRST PARTICULAR CHURCHES.

No express command was anywhere given to collect or organize Christian Churches; but the Jews were familiar with the idea both of a national church and of local worshiping societies. The synagogue was the parish or local church. In large towns, like Jerusalem, there were many synagogues; but the idea that all the worshipers in a place constitute the church in that place was distinctively Christian. The first converts on the day of Pentecost seem to have been regarded as forming "the church" in Jerusalem. Afterwards, it is said, Acts: II, 47, "the Lord added to the church daily," &c.: and this is the first mention of a Christian Church. In the same way, churches were gathered in Samaria, Acts: VIII, 12; Antioch, Acts: XI, 26; throughout Judea and Galilee, Acts: IX, 31; and in Syria and Cilicia, Acts: XV, 41; XVI, 5; "*And so were the churches established in the faith, and increased in number daily.*"

For these congregations of crude and untaught converts, some provision for teaching and government was a primary necessity. The apostles could not remain

*NOTE. — "From all these facts, it is evident that a person may be a member of the Church of Christ at large and not a member of a particular church. A minister is a member of the Church of Christ at large, but is never, in the proper sense, a member of a particular church. This I conceive to be the exact situation of persons baptized in infancy. They are members of the Church of Christ — that is, of the church general. Baptism renders any person capable of membership in a particular church, if he is disposed and otherwise prepared to unite himself to it. But neither this nor his profession of religion will constitute him such a member. This can be done in no other way but by means of that mutual covenant between him and the church, which has been mentioned above." Dwight's Theology, vol. iv, p. 322.

long in any one place themselves, nor could a competent native ministry, at least in Gentile Christian Churches, be raised up on the instant. This necessity was met by a temporary supernatural provision, that of the *charismata*, an arrangement wonderfully adapted, in the wisdom of God, to bridge over the perilous period between the departure of some apostle or evangelist from a church they had gathered of converted Gentiles, and the development in knowledge and Christian character of some member of the church, itself, qualifying him to become its pastor. This peculiar arrangement lasted only during that interval, and, as soon as possible, gave place to that ordinary and permanent office called "the ministry."

The two forms of provision, therefore, for the care of the infant churches, may be distinguished as,

- I. The ministry of gifts, consisting of,
 - a. The unofficial.
 - b. The official.
- II. The ministry of orders.

SEC. X. — THE UNOFFICIAL MINISTRY OF "GIFTS."

This consisted of (1) prophets, (2) tongues, (3) interpretation of tongues, (4) discerning of spirits, (5) teaching, (6) government, (7) healing, (8) miracles generally, with some others of a more doubtful character. (1 Cor. : XII, 8, 28.)

The *charismata* were a supernatural provision for the instruction and government of the infant Gentile Churches, during the interval between their organization and their being provided with a suitable native ministry. In the absence of any competent church officers, the Holy Spirit provided for the training of the early con-

verts, by conferring special "gifts" on individual disciples, adapted to the various wants of the churches.

The *χαρισμα* was apparently an exaltation, by the Holy Spirit, of the individual's special capability for usefulness. The man who had a natural or acquired *fitness* for any particular line of Christian work, found that fitness *exalted*, and himself impelled to its exercise by an inward divine influence. Thus his special talent became a *χαρισμα*.

For the *instruction* of the church, the gifts of "prophecy" and "teaching" were provided. The gift of "teaching" (comprehending both the "word of *knowledge*" and the "word of *wisdom*") answered nearest to the ordinary work of "*preaching*." The gift of "prophecy" seems to have been a faculty for warm and impressive Christian exhortation. Acts: xv, 32: "And Judas and Silas being *prophets*, also exhorted the brethren with many words and confirmed them." 1 Cor. : xiv, 3; "But he that *prophesieth*, speaketh unto men to edification and exhortation and comfort."

The gift of tongues was partly to aid in the preaching of the Gospel to strangers, and partly to manifest, signally, the presence of the Holy Spirit in the assembly. The interpretation was necessary for the edification of those to whom the tongue was unknown.

The gift of "*government*" was the improvement of a natural faculty for administration and practical work.

"The discerning of spirits" was necessary in order to the detection of imposture. The gift of "healing" was, perhaps, a supernatural exaltation of the medical skill of some disciple, for the relief of suffering in the church; and the "gift of *miracles*" generally, was for the purpose

of overawing opposition and convincing unbelief. (Con. and How. : I, ch. XIII.)

We have no reason to believe that the possession of these gifts was peculiar to the Corinthian Church. The exigencies of other infant churches equally called for them. It was the disorders connected with their exercise in Corinth, that led to the more special mention of them there. In regard to them, the following facts may be noticed :

1. That they served as a substitute for the ordinary ministry in Corinth, of which no traces yet appear.

2. That they were bestowed very liberally, not upon a few, but upon *many* members of the church, and without regard to the spiritual attainments of the recipients.

3. That they were sometimes exercised without discretion, in a tumultuous and disorderly way, and, in this form, provoked the ridicule of "unbelievers."

4. That, when properly used, they tended to the comfort of disciples and the conversion of others.

5. That these gifts were often valued by the early disciples in the inverse proportion to their usefulness; the gift of tongues most, and that of teaching and prophecy least.

6. That, being only an elementary and mechanical method for the training of the infant church, they were, as soon as possible, dispensed with; and, that being only "gifts" and not "*graces*," the apostle regarded them all as of less value than the single grace of Christian charity.

SEC. XI. — THE OFFICIAL MINISTRY OF GIFTS.

This consisted of the apostles alone. The apostolic office was *official*, because it included only a select number of men, expressly commissioned for a certain work.

At the same time, it belonged to the ministry *of gifts*, because it was adapted to the infant and forming condition of the church, and was, therefore, transient; and because the apostles were fitted for their work by a large bestowal of charismata upon them. They possessed *all* these "gifts" which were parcelled out singly among other disciples — the gift of "miracles" in general, including the power, not only of "healing," but of "destroying;" the gifts of "prophecy" and "teaching," the gift of "tongues," of "discerning spirits," of "government," and the rest. Being themselves "unlearned and ignorant men," these were rendered necessary by the nature of their work, which was nothing less than laying the foundations of the Christian Church. (Con. and How. : I, 433.)

The apostles were special and "extraordinary" officers, appointed to found and organize the Church of Christ, by preaching the Gospel and testifying, as eye-witnesses, to the resurrection of Jesus. The following particulars belong essentially to the office :

1. Their number was limited to twelve, corresponding to the number of the ancient tribes (leaving out the tribe of Levi). Mat. : XIX, 28 : "Ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes," &c. Rev. : XXI, 14 ; "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the name of THE twelve apostles of the Lamb."

2. The apostles must have been called, personally, by Christ. This was the case with all the original twelve ; and when a vacancy occurred, by the lapse and death of Judas, Christ returned in person to call his successor. Acts : XXVI, 16 ; "For this cause I have appeared unto thee, to make thee a minister and a witness," &c. That is, the reason why Christ must personally appear to Saul,

was to call him by his own voice to the apostolic office.

3. It follows from this, that the apostles must have seen the Lord Jesus Christ. Acts: XXII, 14, 15; "The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou should'st know His will, and SEE THAT JUST ONE, and hear the words of His mouth, for thou shalt be His witness unto all men," &c. 1 Cor.: IX, 1; "Am I not an apostle? am I not free? have I not SEEN Jesus Christ, our Lord?" By the challenge, "Am I not free?" Paul affirms his independent authority as an apostle. He was not made such by any human election, and was under no obligation to any *man* for it. (See Gal.: I, 1; "An apostle, *not of man*, neither by men, but by Jesus Christ." See, also, 1 Cor.: IX, 19.) This passage, therefore, decisively affirms, that if Paul *had* been called to the office by men, and had *not* seen the Lord Jesus Christ, he could not be an apostle.

4. The apostles must be able to testify *as eye-witnesses* to the fact of Christ's resurrection. Luke: XXIV, 46; "And He said unto them, thus it behoved Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead; and ye are *witnesses* of these things." Acts: II, 32; "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are *witnesses*." Acts: XXVI, 16; "For this cause have I appeared unto thee, to make thee both a minister and a *witness*," &c. If Paul had merely been able to report on "*hearsay*" of the resurrection of Christ, and not as an eye witness, he would have been incompetent to take part in laying the foundations of the Christian Church. (*Vide*, also, Acts: I, 21.)

5. The apostles must be able to work miracles. Christ expressly promised this; and the apostles appealed to the fact in evidence of their mission. 1 Cor.: XII, 12; "Truly, the *signs* of an apostle were wrought among

you, in signs and wonders and mighty deeds." The power to work miracles was a necessary attestation of the apostolic office.

SEC. XII. — ATTEMPTS TO PERPETUATE THE MINISTRY OF GIFTS.

Notwithstanding the evidence that the ministry of gifts was a temporary expedient, designed for the infancy of the church, attempts have been made to perpetuate it, both in the unofficial and the official form. In the primitive church, it was believed that the power of working miracles, by healing disease, casting out devils, speaking with tongues, infallibly interpreting Scripture, &c., still continued. The same claim is still made for the Romish Church. Fanatical bodies occasionally arose during the Middle Ages, and have arisen in later times, pretending the power of working miracles, of which the Irvingites in London and the Mormons in this country are recent examples.

In all prelatical churches, it is claimed that the *official* ministry of gifts has been perpetuated from the time of the apostles till now; that the order of apostles is still in existence in great numbers — all bishops being successors of the twelve, and inheriting the same office, in all that is essential to it. The heads of proof for this claim are such as the following:

1. The essential things in the apostolic office were not, having seen Christ, and being called by him personally, being able to testify as eye-witnesses to his resurrection, to work miracles, &c., but the power to transmit a special grace of office by ordination of a lawful ministry, and to govern the church in Christ's name. Therefore, Christ breathed on the apostles and said, *Receive ye the Holy*

Ghost, and promised to be with them, even unto the end of the world — that is, with their successors, who, ever since the first century, have been called “bishops.”

2. There is no evidence that any others than apostles exercised the right of ordaining.

3. Various others besides the original twelve are called apostles, as Barnabas, Epaphroditus, Andronicus and Junias. (Acts : XIV, 14 ; Rom. : XVI, 7 ; Phil. : II, 25, and IV, 18.)

4. The apostles set the example of perpetuating their office in the case of Matthias. (Acts : I, 20.)

5. Timothy, Titus and the angels of the seven churches plainly exercised apostolic powers, such as ordaining, governing the church, &c.

To these is added the historical evidence that an Episcopal constitution has prevailed in the church from the time of the apostles ; that Ignatius and other primitive fathers speak of bishops as having succeeded to the apostles, and that no other form of government was known in the church, till after the Reformation.

To these claims, we reply in order, as follows :

1. The apostles united in themselves two separate functions. They were inspired and miraculously endowed witnesses of the resurrection of Christ, and they were preachers of the Gospel. In the first character, as already shown, they could have no successors. In the second, their successors are all faithful ministers of the Gospel. It is with *these*, and not with *bishops* alone, that Christ promised to be, even to the end of the world.

2. As respects the claim that none but the apostles and the bishops, their successors, could have the right to ordain, it is replied, that Timothy was ordained by the hands of the presbytery. (1 Tim. : IV, 14.) This act is

claimed in the Episcopal Church to have been Timothy's *consecration* as bishop; and the only escape from the conclusion that presbyters or elders took part in it is the gratuitous and absurd assumption that all the Presbytery consisted of apostles.*

3. To the allegation that various others besides the original twelve are called "apostles," it is replied, that *apostolos* is used in the New Testament in two distinct senses.

a. Its technical and official meaning, in which it is applied only to the original twelve and Paul.

b. Its general etymological sense of delegate or missionary, in which it is applied a few times to other persons, as Barnabas, who was a specially appointed missionary (Acts: XIV, 14), and Epaphroditus, who was the *messenger* of the Philippians to Paul. (Phil.: II, 25; IV, 18. See Con. and How.: 1, ch. XIII, for a table of the uses of *apostolos* in N. T.)

4. To the argument for the perpetuation of the apostolic office, drawn from the case of Matthias, it is replied, that Christ personally called twelve apostles, corresponding to the twelve tribes of Israel, and gave no intimation that the number was ever to exceed twelve. After the death of Judas, Peter (who was often hasty in speech and action) proposed that some competent person should be chosen, by lot or ballot, to fill his place. Nominating two, they drew lots between them. Matthias was chosen, and "was numbered with the eleven apostles." But there is good reason for regarding this procedure as wholly unauthorized and invalid. viz.:

a. The apostles were required to tarry at Jerusalem until they should be endowed with power from on high,

* See Appendix A.

implying that they were to undertake no official work till then. This power had not yet been bestowed.

b. No mention whatever of Matthias occurs after this event — contrary to what might have been expected, on the supposition that this was a legitimate transaction.

c. Christ himself, by personally calling Paul, supplied the place of Judas, thus making the number twelve good, and never called any others.

d. The election of Matthias is merely related as a historic fact, without anything to indicate its approval by the Great Head of the church.

It is no answer to these statements, that after the election of Matthias and before the calling of Paul, the apostles are spoken of as "*the twelve.*" "The twelve" is merely the official title of the college of apostles. They are so called after the death of Judas and before the election of Matthias, when there were certainly but eleven. John: xx, 24; "But Thomas, one of the twelve, was not with them." 1 Cor.: xv, 5; "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve."

It is said there was a divine warrant for this election in the passage quoted by Peter, "*His bishoprick let another take.*" We reply: another did take his office by the personal call of Christ, viz., Paul.

But it is said, "The lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles."

Answer. — The lot must have fallen upon one of the two, and the statement only implies that he was reckoned an apostle by those who elected him. But no subsequent recognition of the act occurs.

Admitting, however, that the election of Matthias was valid, the transaction makes, in the most explicit way, against the claim of Episcopal bishops to be apostles.

Peter states what, in his view, was an indispensable qualification for the office, viz.: Having been so personally acquainted with the Lord Jesus Christ as to be a competent witness to the fact of His resurrection. (Acts: I, 21, 23.) Whatever may be said of the election of Matthias as successor to Judas, no one can now pretend to be an apostle who cannot testify as eye-witness to that fact.

If it is said that this view of the transaction is injurious to the inspired authority of the sacred writer, it is replied, that the effect of inspiration is to secure a correct report of things as they occurred, not to endorse their legitimacy.

The conclusion will be, that the special ministry of gifts, both unofficial and official, terminated at the close of the Apostolic Period, and was succeeded by the permanent *ministry of orders*.

SEC. XIII. — HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FOR THE SUPPOSED PERPETUATION OF THE MINISTRY OF GIFTS.

The proofs alleged in favor of the continuance of the *unofficial* ministry of gifts in the church, are found in the supposed cases of miraculous exorcism, healing, restoration from death, speaking with tongues, &c. in the primitive church; and, in addition to these, of numberless cases, in the Romish Church, of weeping or winking images, control by saints, of birds, beasts and the elements, prophecy, liquefaction of blood. (St. Januarius, St. Peter of Arbues, &c.)

These are so easily explained as the fruit of superstition, or imposture, as to require no detailed refutation.*

* These pretended Romish miracles are mostly copied, with close imitation, after those of Christ and the apostles; many of them, also, after those of Elijah, Elisha and other Old Testament worthies. There is not a miracle recorded of Jesus, that is not paralleled and even greatly exceeded in the lives of the monastic saints. (*Vide Legendes Pieuses*, ch. 1.)

It is also claimed, that the official ministry of gifts, or the apostleship, still abides in the church, having been perpetuated by an unbroken succession from St. Peter, or St. John. In support of this claim, lists are given of the names of bishops extending from them to their present pretended successors; in the Romish Church, from St. Peter to Pius IX; in the Episcopal Church, from St. John to the English and American bishops.

In addition to the evidence already given, that the apostolic office was not transmissible, we allege, historically, in disproof of this claim, as follows:

1. Although full lists of names are given, as handing down an apostolical succession, evidence is entirely lacking as to a large number of the parties named — who they were, whether duly qualified and canonically ordained, date of service, &c. The only authentic accounts of the succession of bishops, which anywhere existed, were those kept in the church books, called *diptychs*. But there is no mention of such books before the fourth century, and any other supposed or pretended church archives rest upon nothing but vague tradition.

The first to speak of any succession of bishops is Irenæus (circ. A. D. 180), and his arrangement is contradicted by other writers. Then, even as to the succession in the Church of Rome — the greatest and best known of all — there is irreconcilable confusion at the very beginning. Irenæus gives the first four thus: 1. Peter; 2. Linus; 3. Anacletus; 4. Clemens. Tertullian, twenty years later, transposes them thus: 1. Peter; 2. Clemens; 3. Linus; 4. Anacletus. Augustine shuffles them again, with this result: 1. Peter; 2. Linus; 3. Clemens; 4. Anacletus.

To say nothing of the false intrusion of Peter at the

head of the list (there being no evidence whatever that he was ever even *in* the City of Rome), the other discrepancies show that it was drawn merely from tradition. (See Jacobs, p. 71.)

The Romish line afterwards is full of confusion, uncertainty and the most violent irregularities.

2. Besides this, and in preference to it, the Anglican and Episcopal Churches claim to derive an unbroken apostolic succession from the ancient British Church, and from St. John through the ancient Gallic Church.

As to the first, which it is alleged was planted by St. Paul, or some other person independent of the Church of Rome, we reply :

a. That the history of the planting of Christianity in Britain is wholly fabulous and conjectural.

b. That no records are even pretended of the succession of bishops in that church, for the first five centuries.

c. That whatever may have been the original British Church, it was almost entirely extirpated by the heathen Saxons (middle of the fifth century).

d. That, at the end of the sixth century (596), there was found in Britain a feeble and scattered church, with an Episcopal constitution. independent of Rome. but equally corrupt and superstitious. Obviously, therefore, nothing of the pretended apostolic succession can be traced through this line.

As to the succession from St. John, we are told that in A. D. 596. Augustine, the Monk, with forty others, was sent, by Pope Gregory I, to convert the Anglo-Saxons, and establish the authority of Rome in England, both which he effected. By direction of the Pope, he went to Arles, in Gaul, and was there consecrated bishop, by Etherich (or Vigilus?), bishop of that city: (Near-

der: III, 14). and the Bishop of Arles, it is claimed, derived his succession from the bishops of Asia Minor, and so from St. John. To this, it is enough to reply :

e. That the derivation of the churches in Gaul, direct from Asia Minor, is a mere matter of conjecture. (Neander: I, 84.)

f. But, even if so derived, no names of any Gallic Bishops are preserved for the first three centuries; and from thence to the time of Augustine the Monk, only an imperfect and uncertain list, with no evidence accompanying it.

3. The succession of the English bishops from the Romish Church, at the time of the Reformation, is open to very serious suspicion.*

SEC. XIV. — THE FALSE AND THE TRUE DOCTRINE OF THE APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

It has been already shown that the apostles, as such, or in what constituted the peculiarity of their office, could have no successors. As respects their work of preaching the Gospel, all true ministers of Christ are their successors. In the Episcopal Church, it is held, that the peculiarity of the apostolic office was the right *to ordain*, and the power, received direct from Christ, to hand down a certain mysterious grace of office to other apostles, who should succeed them to the end of the world; that, in order to the transmission of this grace, there must be an unbroken succession of apostles (now called bishops), touching hand to hand all the way down from the original twelve; that without such a succession, there is no authorized ministry on earth, since there is no one having the right to ordain; and without such a ministry, there is no true Church of Christ; thus, mak-

* See Appendix B.

ing the very existence of the church depend on the ministry, and on the ministry constituted in one particular way. It is boldly affirmed, that if there is no such succession, or if such a succession, having been begun, has been broken off any time during the past ages, there is not now on earth any true church, nor any lawful ministry, nor ever could be, unless Christ should return in person to re-establish them.

If such vital consequences depend on an unbroken apostolic succession, it is reasonable to demand that the existence of such a "grace" should be made palpable, and that every step in the process, from now back to the twelve apostles, should be rigidly demonstrated.

We deny that any such succession is promised in Scripture, or can be historically traced, or can be in any manner shown to be now extant. The lists of Bishops of Rome or of Arles, reaching back to St. Peter and St. John, consist, for several centuries, of mere names, with no evidence whatever that they answer to real persons, or that those persons were duly qualified and canonically ordained. Percival (*Apol. for Apost. Suc.*) and others claim that they are not bound to produce any such evidence; that it is enough to show the fact of an Episcopal constitution through all periods, and that this includes, of course, the regular and canonical ordination of all persons who appear on the lists as bishops.

Archbishop Whately, on the other hand, affirms, with the amplest historical warrant, that during long periods in the Middle Ages there was gross disregard of both Scriptural and canonical laws in the ordination of bishops; that children, drunkards, illiterate and profligate laymen, were consecrated: that bishops obtained the office by bribery, and were intruded into their dioceses

by force; and, "in fine, there were so serious disorders, that there is not a minister in Christendom who can trace up, with any approach to certainty, his spiritual pedigree." We have no objection to admit that for several centuries past there may have been an unbroken succession of bishops in the Romish and Anglican Churches; but it is of no avail to demonstrate the succession for even a thousand years, if it cannot be equally proven for the remainder. The strength of the chain is only as the strength of its weakest link; and every link in this succession is absolutely worthless, the soundness of which cannot be historically demonstrated. The Episcopal claim, in this matter, is not only false and superstitious in its nature, but is wanting in evidence even to the extent of absurdity.

The true doctrine of the apostolic succession is, that there has never failed to be a Church of Christ on earth holding the apostles' doctrine, and that this church has in all ages originated and lawfully commissioned a ministry, by whom the Word has been preached and the sacraments administered according to Christ's appointment. This true church has been more or less obscure under the Christian dispensation, as it often was under the Jewish. In the time of Elijah, it had apparently become extinct, but it still survived in the persons of some thousand scattered and unknown believers. They were within the membership of the apostate Church of Israel, but they perpetuated the existence of the true church of God's people.

During the apostolic and primitive periods, the visible and outward church was also the true Church of Christ. When that outward church became so corrupt as to be Anti-Christian, the true church was perpetuated either

by purer Christian communities, as the Waldenses, or by scattered families and societies who were members of the Church of Rome without being fatally involved in her apostacy.

It only remains to add, on this point, that there is no promise in the Scriptures of any "apostolic succession," except on the *petitio principii* that Christ could only be with His disciples to the end of the world by means of bishops, and there is no evidence of the possession of any special grace by bishops, which makes them better men or better ministers of Christ than others, or gives any special efficacy to the sacraments they administer.*

SEC. XV. — THE MINISTRY OF ORDERS — FIRST CLASS —
ELDERS.

The ministry of gifts being a special provision for the churches in the interval between their founding and their consolidation as societies, was superseded, as soon as practicable, by the *ministry of orders* — a ministry per-

*Dr. Jacobs, having quoted Hooker to the effect that "in some things every presbyter, in some things only bishops, in some things neither the one nor the other, are the apostles' successors," observes: "It might, with equal truth and force, be added, that in some things *every Christian man* is a successor of the apostles. The apostles ordained presbyters, and so do bishops; the apostles preached Christ, and so do presbyters; the apostles believed in Jesus, and so do all Christian men. But all this has really nothing to do with the question whether the apostles had any successors *in their apostleship*. In all the essential powers and authority of the apostle's office, they had and could have none to succeed them, and the question is not fairly met and argued by Hooker. Indeed, in spite of the high estimation in which Hooker has always been justly held, in spite of his great and admirable qualities, his genius, learning, eloquence and piety, a thoughtful and unprejudiced man will hardly read through the whole of his *Ecclesiastical Polity* (which I suspect very few of our modern Divinity students do), without once and again feeling that he is listening to an advocate bent upon saying all that can be said on one side, and not always having the best of the argument, rather than a fair investigator of the truth, and regretting that never since his time has an authoritative and impartial judge summed up the case between Hooker and his Puritan opponents, and obtained a just verdict in the cause." — *Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament*, by Rev. Dr. Jacobs, late Head Master of Christ's Hospital, London; Randolph & Co., N. Y., p. 26.

manently subsisting, that is, in two principal classes adapted to meet all the ordinary wants of the church — one for instruction and pastoral care, the other for fiduciary and beneficiary trusts. These offices are those of, 1. Elders or bishops: 2. Of deacons.

The office and name of *elder* were very familiar to the Jews in their synagogue worship. In every synagogue there was a body of elders, charged with the care of public worship and discipline. They led the prayers of the people according to a prescribed form, superintended the reading of the Scriptures, and exhorted, or called on others to exhort. Of these elders, the one who presided at any time was called the *Ruler of the Synagogue*, "*the Angel of the Church*," and the *Chazan*, overseer, or bishop. This latter title was particularly given him because when the Scriptures were read, he stood by the reader, watching him and carefully guarding against mistakes.

Now the earliest converts were Jews by nation; and as synagogue congregations were quite small, it is not at all unlikely that all, or nearly all, the members of a synagogue might, in some cases, be converted at once. There would then be no occasion for any change in the *arrangements* for worship. Things would go on as before. The elders would preside and conduct the service; but the worship would be *Christian* and not Jewish. In other cases, the change would be more gradual, but, in every instance, existing usages would be preserved as far as possible. This explains the fact that there is nowhere any account of the first appointment of Christian elders. There is no command to institute this form of government. It is simply taken for granted. So far as we are informed, therefore, and in all probability, the ministry

of gifts (unofficial) was confined entirely to the Gentile Churches, in which the ministry had to be originated, *de novo*, and where there could be, at first, no suitable persons to invest with the eldership. In these churches, as Corinth, Thessalonike, &c., the Spirit Himself was the immediate teacher and ruler, through the charismata, He imparted to the disciples; but at the earliest moment, probably, that suitable candidates could be found for the ministry of orders, the temporary provision of gifts was withdrawn.

Of this process, we find distinct intimations in the Acts and letters of the Apostles. The earlier Epistles (Galatians, Corinthians, Romans) contain no mention whatever of any church officers. They are addressed to "the church," or "the faithful," &c. The Epistle to the Philippians, one of the very latest (A. D. 62. Con. and How.), is addressed to "*the saints, with the bishops and deacons*;" and the Epistles to Timothy and Titus (same year) give explicit directions as to the constitution of church government.

The Epistles to the Thessalonians indicate the transition stage. Spiritual gifts were still in exercise among them, but apparently losing favor (1 Thess. : v, 19, 20), and, at the same time, the disciples are exhorted to "*know them that are over them in the Lord, and admonish them*," implying official authority. In the Acts of the Apostles, the same thing appears. In Acts : XI, 30, (the first instance in which *elders* are mentioned) it is in connection with *Jewish Churches*. The disciples in Antioch made a contribution in aid of the brethren in *Judea*, and sent it *to the elders* by the hands of Barnabas and Saul. In *these churches*, elders are taken for granted. But in gathering churches in Gentile cities, we find that the missionaries first in-

structed *ἐξουσιάζοντες* (Acts: XIV, 21) — able or competent persons — and afterwards *ordained* them elders, in every city. They transplanted into the *Gentile* Churches, the same arrangements which spontaneously grew up in the Jewish Churches, so that the church constitution was uniform everywhere. No other officers were known save elders and deacons; only a difference of title seems, to some extent, to have prevailed. “*Elders*” was a word of *Jewish* origin. In the *Gentile* Church, the same office was described by a term more familiar to them, “*episcopos*” (bishop.) But the two titles are used by the Apostle Paul interchangeably. Thus (Acts: XX, 17, 28), he called the *elders* of the church of Ephesus and said, take heed to the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you *bishops*. Titus: I, 5, 7; “That thou should’st ordain *elders* in every city, if any be blameless,” &c., “for a *bishop* must be blameless,” &c.

The qualifications and duties of the eldership are indicated in these passages and throughout the pastoral epistles. They must enjoy the confidence of the church, and, therefore, be men of good repute, blameless in their personal and family relations, studious, diligent, sound in doctrine as in life, not *novices* or new converts, nor disposed to lord it over God’s heritage. They were to preach the Word diligently, both in public and private; to watch over the flock, instructing them in all the duties of the Christian life; to exercise discipline against offenders, and to perpetuate the ministry by committing their office and doctrine to faithful men, who should be able to teach others also. So far as preaching, pastoral care, government and ordination are concerned, there was neither occasion nor room for any higher office than this in the churches.

SEC. XVI. — ONLY TWO ORDERS IN THE MINISTRY.

It is claimed in prelatical churches, that the ministry exists, by Christ's appointment, in three orders — bishops, priests and deacons — and that the type and source of the first is to be found in the apostolic office. It is admitted that, in New Testament usage, the name of bishop is given to the second order; but it is claimed, as already noticed, that the apostleship was to be permanent in the church, that successors of the apostles were actually chosen, and that very early the *name* of *bishop* was reserved exclusively for these, while the title of presbyter or priest was given to the second order. To this, we reply :

1. The apostles ordained *elders* in every church, and no higher class of officers. Acts: XIV, 23; "And when they had ordained them elders," &c.

2. Bishops or elders, and deacons are the only church officers mentioned in the Epistles. (See Phil. : I, 1.)

3. The apostles committed to the elders the entire spiritual oversight of the flocks, including instruction, government and discipline. (Acts: XX, 28-31.)

4. The apostles themselves, so far as concerned their *grade* in the ministry, were only elders. 1 Peter : v, 1; "The elders which are among you, I exhort, who also am an elder."

5. Timothy, Titus and others, who are claimed to have been bishops and successors of the apostles, were merely *elders*, commissioned to act as evangelists, or traveling assistants to the apostles. They were sent from place to place, as the exigencies of the churches required, or left behind to perfect their organization, while Paul proceeded on his missionary progress. (1 Tim. : I, 3-7; 2 Tim. : IV, 9, 11, 21; Titus : I, 5.)

6. The qualifications required both in elders and deacons are carefully laid down in the pastoral epistles, but none for any higher grade. If *bishops* were an office in the church superior to elders, more essential and more responsible, it is incredible Paul should have said nothing as to the qualifications for this office, when he thought it necessary to give precise instructions as to the kind of men to be chosen deacons. In the only instance in which it is even pretended we have any account of a successor of the apostles being chosen, Peter states, as an indispensable qualification, that he must have seen the Lord Jesus Christ.

7. The only Scripture evidence alleged for the perpetuation of the apostolic office in the persons of bishops is found in the case of Matthias and of Timothy (already considered), and in the angels of the seven churches. It is claimed, e. g., that the *angel of the church of Ephesus* (Rev. : II, 1-8) evidently possessed powers superior to those of the *elders of Ephesus* (Acts : XX, 28), showing that *he* was the *bishop* of the church, while the others were only presbyters.

On the other hand, we affirm that a comparison of these passages shows there was no essential distinction between the powers and duties of the two. The "angels" are nowhere called either "apostles" or "bishops," and no evidence appears showing that the angel of the church of Ephesus was anything different, officially, from the *angel* of the Jewish synagogue, viz., the superintendent of public worship in that church — in other words, the pastor, or, in the Scripture sense, *bishop*.*

* NOTE. — All this was thoroughly gone over by Smectymnus against Bishop Hall, and nothing of any weight has been added to the controversy, on either side, since. — Hunt 1, 174.

SEC. XVII. — FIRST STAGE IN THE MINISTRY OF ORDERS —
ORIGIN OF THE PASTORATE.

It has been already observed that the "ministry of gifts" was superseded, as soon as practicable, by the appointment of suitable persons to the work of teaching and ruling in each congregation. A permanent ministry was provided, who, not as the mere organs of the Holy Spirit, but as suitably instructed and ordained *officers*, should be charged with the instruction and pastoral care of the flock. This consisted of a number of *elders*, probably chosen by the people, and set apart by some apostle or evangelist. These elders were charged, in common, with the entire spiritual interests of the flock. They all might preach and administer ordinances, no one of them being distinguished from the others as pastor. But this arrangement soon led to difficulties and suggested a further step in organization. St. Jerome, in commenting on Titus: 1, 5, 7, speaks of this as follows: "*Idem est ergo presbyter qui et episcopus; et antequam diaboli instinctu studia in religione fierent, et diceretur in populis ego sum Pauli, ego Apollo, ego autem Cephe, communi Presbyterorum concilio ecclesie gubernabantur. Postquam vero unusquisque eos quos baptizaverat suos putabat esse, non Christi discipulos, in toto orbe decretum est, ut unus de presbyteris electus, superponentur cæteris, ad quem omnis ecclesie cura pertineret, et schismatum semina tollerentur.*"

The reference is plain to the condition of things in the apostolic church. The converts gathered themselves in groups, each around the particular elder who had baptized them, and were inclined to magnify *him*, and depreciate the others. The remedy was simple, and it was wisely and timely applied. It was to select from the body of the elders in each church one who was best qual-

ified, and set him over the others, with the exclusive right of receiving new members by baptism, and taking the oversight of the flock — that is, he became the pastor, or, as he came to be called distinctively, the “bishop.” The other elders limited themselves to the work of exhortation and government, and were called distinctively “presbuteroi.” A little later, it came also to be the exclusive right of the bishop to take part in the ordination of other bishops: but, on the other hand, the elders had still the right of administering the Lord’s Supper. Before the close of the Apostolic Period then, probably, the ministry of gifts had entirely passed away, and each church was provided with a body of elders, of whom one was the episcopus or pastor.

SEC. XVIII. — SECOND STAGE IN THE MINISTRY OF ORDERS — ORIGIN OF THE EPISCOPATE.

It has been already shown that, according to the apostolic and primitive idea, all the believers in a place composed *the church* of that place, and this without regard to the size of the place or the number of believers. At first, the *church* and the *congregation* in each city were the same; but, with the increase of believers, it soon became necessary, especially in large towns, to distribute *the church*, for the purposes of ordinary worship, into different congregations. This introduced a new element into the question. The disciples in Rome, e. g., all composed the *one church of Rome*. For *one church* there needed but one bishop. This came very early to be the fixed understanding; every church must have a bishop, and no *church* could have more than one bishop. But each distinct congregation needed its own teacher and pastor. This need was met by appointing *the presbyters* as pastors,

in succession, over new congregations, as they arose. As soon as it came about, therefore, that there were two or ten distinct congregations in the one church of Rome, there was, of necessity, a system of Episcopacy. Each separate society was grouped around its presbyter, and *all* the societies, with their presbyters, were grouped around the one bishop. These presbyters were merely local teachers or pastors. To the bishop it was reserved to baptize all converts, to administer the Lord's Supper (personally, or by the hands of a presbyter acting in his name), to exercise discipline and to perpetuate the ministry by ordination.

Of the process by which this development was brought about, it is true we have no contemporaneous description. The period of 150 years following the death of the Apostle Paul is one of the obscurest in all church history. Almost all reliable monuments of it have perished. After the close of the inspired canon, we have only the crude and corrupted writings of the apostolic fathers and fragments of early apologies. Nothing remains illustrating the church constitution in this period, except the Ignatian epistles. In 150 years great changes in society may take place; and in times of simplicity and confidence *within* the church, and of disturbance and persecution *without*, might take place unobserved or unrecorded.

The result was that Episcopacy gradually and naturally grew up out of these two principles. 1. That all the Christians in a city constitute *the church* in that city. 2. That every church must have ONE bishop, and BUT one. We find the system well established as early as A. D. 250, in the great cities of Rome, Carthage and Alexandria, where we know the *one church* was distrib-

uted into numerous congregations, and we have no knowledge of it, at that time, anywhere else. Its extension into the rural districts was a work of time, and went on through the fourth and fifth centuries. The final result was, that the system of the capital was extended so as to embrace the adjacent churches. The country bishops (chor-bishops) — i. e., the pastors of congregations, who still retained the name and prerogatives of bishops, were suppressed, and presbyters, subject to the city bishop, or “metropolitan,” intruded in their room. Ecclesiastical geography shows that, in the fifth century, there were great numbers of bishops whose diocese was only a small town or village: and early church canons even provide for the election of a bishop having full Episcopal powers, whenever twelve families would unite to sustain public worship.*

SEC. XIX. — MINISTRY OF ORDERS — SECOND CLASS—
DEACONS.

The existence in the temple service of the *Levites* and *nethinims* might naturally suggest the appointment of a class of officials, in the church, who, though not strictly “hewers of wood,” &c., should devote themselves to the secular concerns of the flock. In the synagogue, also, there were the *parnasim*, whose business was to distribute alms, &c. A demand for such a class would arise almost at once, in the fact of poor, widowed and infirm disciples, whose wants appealed to the Christian spirit of sympathy and brotherhood. It is probable, therefore, from the very

* We equidly hold that every *church* must have a bishop; but this *church*, with us, is the local congregation of believers, of which there may be many in a city, and, therefore, many bishops. If there is a spot anywhere where there is but a single Christian society, with its pastor, there is an Episcopacy precisely the same as that of the most primitive church.

founding of the church in Jerusalem, there was an order of ministers (*διδασκαλῆς*) on whom that charge was devolved. These would also as naturally be *Hebrews* or *Levite Jews*.

It has been common to find the first appointment of deacons in the transaction recorded Acts: VI. 1; but the circumstances indicate that this was rather an increase of a body already existing. It was the Hellenists who complained of being neglected, and the seven chosen appear from their names to have been all Hellenists, except Parmenas who was a Gentile proselyte. It may, therefore, seem probable that there was already in the church in Jerusalem a body of seven Hebrew deacons; seven others were added — six for the Hellenist converts, and one for the much smaller body of Gentile converts. These are not, indeed, *called* deacons; but the nature of their functions shows that they filled the same office to which the Apostle Paul applies that name. His Epistle to the Philippians is addressed to the saints, with the bishops and deacons: and in 1 Tim. : III, he lays down particularly the qualifications for the deaconship. This list and the account in Acts: VI. show plainly that the deacons were not a *preaching* order. They must be “men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and of wisdom.” (Acts: VI, 3). Being concerned with pecuniary trusts, it was necessary they should be men of reputation for honesty: having the difficult and delicate task of distributing the church funds among various and somewhat jealous claimants, they must be men of wisdom: * and having a laborious and self-sacrificing work to perform, they must be men whose zeal and devotion would sustain them in it — “*full of the Holy Ghost.*”

* A member of the committee employed to distribute aid among the sufferers after the great fire in Pittsburg (1875?) observed, that he had never been engaged in so difficult, laborious and unthankful a work.

But not a word is said of any gift specially required in the work of preaching the Gospel. So, in 1 Tim. : III, Paul requires that deacons should have prudence, gravity, exemplary character and soundness in the faith — such qualities as a Christian man of business, charged with pecuniary trusts, ought to have — but nothing suggesting the idea of the deaconship being a spiritual or didactic office. On the other hand, this is implied in every mention of the eldership. They were to feed the flock of God (Acts : XX, 28) ; to be “ apt to teach ” (1 Tim. : III, 2) ; to “ be able, by sound doctrine, both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers (Titus : I, 9).

It was expressly that they might serve tables, and thus leave the apostles free for the work of preaching the Gospel, that the seven were appointed.

The fact that in the Epistle to Titus no mention is made of deacons may suggest the doubt whether this office belongs essentially to the constitution of the Christian Church, or whether, as the history in Acts : VI, would seem to imply, it is a discretionary arrangement, depending on the exigencies of each particular church. But this is at least plain, that wherever there is a call for deacons, it is with a view to the care of the poor and other appropriate temporalities.

In the Episcopal Church, the deaconship is a preaching office, and constitutes the third grade in their “ *three-fold ministry* ” In support of this, it is said, that some of the seven deacons preached, as Stephen and Philip. But of Stephen it is only related that he *disputed* with the Jews (Acts : VI, 8). It was only such Christian argument and effort as was the duty of all believers. *All* the disciples preached in this sense. Acts : VIII, 4 ; “ Therefore, they that were scattered abroad ” — i. e., the

whole church of Jerusalem — “ went everywhere, *preaching the Word.*”

As for Philip, who did preach and baptize (Acts: VIII, 5, 38), we are expressly informed that he was *an evangelist* (Acts: XXI, 8), having, perhaps, been raised to this office from his possessing greater gifts for usefulness than were required in the diaconship.

Notwithstanding the claim above referred to, the office of deacon, in the Anglican and Episcopal Churches, is of no further importance than as it serves as a kind of probation for the priesthood. The Episcopal deacon is merely a licentiate who is permitted to preach and baptize. All graduates of Episcopal Seminaries are immediately ordained deacons, and none remain longer in the office than until they are called to some congregation.* Prof. Jacobs observes, p. 69: “ The deacon seldom retains his office for more than one year, regarding it as a mere stepping-stone to the higher order; and thus the diaconate is stripped of its distinctive character and rendered almost useless in our church.” In the Episcopal “ Church Congress ” (New York, Oct. 7, 1874), Rev. E. C. Porter observed, that “ some other Protestant Churches have retained in fact, as well as in name, the *diaconate*, of which *we* have the *name*, but hardly anything more.”

SEC. XX. — OFFICE OF RULING ELDER — ITS WARRANT.

Since the time of John Calvin, the doctrine has prevailed in all Presbyterian Churches, that while there are only *two orders* in the ministry, viz., elders and deacons, the eldership exists in two forms, that of the *teaching* and that of the *ruling* elder. The Scripture evidence in sup-

*The rubric, at the end of the office for “ the ordering of deacons,” directs, that “ the deacon must continue in that office for the space of a whole year, except, for reasonable causes, it shall otherwise seem good unto the bishop.”

port of this is found in the fact of a plurality of elders in each church, and the distinction the apostle seems to draw between the *elders who ruled well* and the *elders who labored in word and doctrine*. (1 Tim. : v, 17.)

That some such distinction must have existed appears from what has already been shown of the development of the ministry of orders. As soon as *one* of the elders in each church became the episcopos or teaching elder, and had the exclusive right of baptizing and presiding over the church, the others became, distinctively, *ruling elders*, being confined to acting with and under him in the pastoral care of the flock. But this was only a transient stage in the growth of the church constitution, since each elder soon became the pastor of a separate flock.

Without claiming any divine right, or express Scripture warrant, for a ruling eldership, sufficient justification for it is found in the importance (recognized by all Protestant bodies) of having in each church a certain number of judicious and responsible men to advise with the pastor in regard to all the interests of the flock. Whether they are called a consistory, or standing committee, or vestry, or class leaders, or elders, is immaterial. Their object and duties are in all cases essentially the same.

The Presbyterian Church has retained the Scripture title of "*elders*." The Form of Government, chap. v, says: "Ruling elders are properly the representatives of the people, chosen by them for the purpose of exercising government and discipline in conjunction with the pastor. This office has been understood by a great portion of the Protestant 'Reformed' Churches to be designated in the Scriptures, by the title of 'governments,' *

* But note that "governments" were only a "charism," not part of the ministry of orders.

(1 Cor. : XII, 28), and of *those who rule well*, but do not labor in word and doctrine." (1 Tim. : v. 17.)

Ruling elders are spiritual officers of the church, belonging to the same order with teaching elders and of equal authority, but ordained especially to the work of ruling and not teaching. The teaching elder is also a ruling elder, but not *vice versa*, since he takes part in all acts of government, discipline, &c., while the ruling elder does not officially teach. Ruling elders are declared to be the "representatives of the people." But since, according to the constitution and the heretofore prevailing usage in the church, they are chosen *for life*, their representative character is imperfect. The theory of a representative system requires that the power delegated to rulers shall return often enough to the people to enable them to give a fair expression of their own sentiments. Representatives chosen for life are as inconsistent with this theory in the church, as they would be in the state. But this usage does not belong to the essence, nor to the early history of Presbyterianism. The Church of Geneva, organized by Calvin himself, had a changeable or "rotary" eldership. The Churches of France and Holland adopted the same rule, and also the Scottish Kirk, as organized by John Knox. This is also the practice of the "Reformed" (Dutch) Church in this country; and, notwithstanding the provisions of the constitution (Form of Gov. : XIII, 6, 7), had come to prevail extensively in our churches. By the General Assembly of 1875, the changeable eldership was expressly authorized, but with the unfortunate incumbrance of retaining the indelible character of ordination.

SEC. XXI. — HISTORICAL JUSTIFICATION OF EPISCOPACY.

It has been shown already that Episcopacy sprung up in post-apostolic times, through the operation of two principles: 1. The Scriptural principle, that all the believers in a place constitute *the church* in that place; 2. The unscriptural rule, that one church can have only one bishop; whereas, since the Scriptural bishop was only the pastor of a single congregation, there should have been as many bishops in a city as there were congregations. So long as the disciples in Rome composed but one congregation, they needed but one bishop. When it became necessary to divide *the church* into two congregations, the second should also have had a bishop as its pastor — the independent and equal fellow laborer of the first bishop. There should then have been as many bishops in a city as there were congregations, just as now in the Presbyterian Church, where every pastor is an independent “bishop.” This was prevented by the silent but rapid growing up of the idea that there could be but one bishop to a city — that is, to a church — be the same larger or smaller. Under this principle, as already explained, Episcopacy naturally and spontaneously came to exist, as soon as *the church* in any place was divided into two or more congregations.

This at once introduced a hierarchy, with all its subsequent evils. But in the *primitive church*, and during the early infancy and struggles of Christianity, it may be admitted to have been a *salutary*, as it was a necessary development. Close *unity* among the feeble and persecuted disciples was then a matter of vital necessity. Having no precedents, constitution, nor creeds, outside the Scriptures — the canon of Scripture itself, indeed, being not yet settled — they might be in danger of

diverging widely from each other at the very outset. To uphold the faith in its integrity, to enforce discipline, to maintain harmony of rites and worship, it was necessary that the church should be strictly *one*. The disciples, at that time, having no competency for confederation, self-government, or Presbyterianism, unity was best secured by regarding all the Christians in a place as making up the church in that place, and, no matter into how many congregations divided, all subject to one bishop. This would go far to prevent those dangerous rivalries and schisms, which the existence of a number of independent bishops in a place might have occasioned, and, in fact, *did* prevent them, until the church had well nigh passed through the critical period of her early struggles. Then, the exaggeration of this simple Episcopacy into a domineering hierarchy led to those attempts at resistance on the part of the presbyters, which have been already noticed as the schisms at Carthage and at Rome. An Episcopacy which had recognized itself as only an arrangement of expediency, for the maintenance of unity in the churches, and had forborne all pretensions to any exclusive divine right to ordain and govern, might have continued to be a wise and safe constitution.

SEC. XXII. — SPHERE OF WOMAN IN THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

As much as woman was raised by the Hebrew laws and customs above her place in heathen society, so much was the Christian woman elevated above the Jewess. Although there were a few cases of Jewish women occupying public positions, as Deborah, Huldah, &c., yet no woman was permitted to take any part in the temple or the synagogue service. But in the birth and in all the

public ministry of Jesus, distinguished honor was put on the female sex: and in the first meeting of Christ's disciples after His ascension (Acts: I. 14), women were present, as well as men. In the Acts mention is, from time to time, made of female disciples, as Dorcas and Rhoda; and the first convert made in Europe was a woman (Lydia. Acts: XVI. 14).

Female disciples shared in the "ministry of gifts," as appears from the case of Philip's daughters (Acts: XXI, 9), and the women in the Corinthian Church, who prayed and prophesied (1 Cor.: XI. 5). When the *ministry of gifts* gave place to the *ministry of orders*, room was also found for the activities of woman. The customs of the Levant not allowing free social intercourse between the sexes, it was necessary to provide a class of female church officers, who could visit, without restraint, in the *homes* of the disciples, for the purposes of instruction, comfort and discipline. Intimations of such a class are found in the apostolic writings. Phebe was a servant (*δίακονός*) of the church in Cenchrea (Rom.: XVI. 1). Priscilla was a "helper" of Paul (Rom.: XVI. 3). The "elder women" are spoken of in such a way (Titus: II, 3) as to suggest that they were *female elders* (*πρεσβυτείδες*). In 1 Tim.: III, this class of disciples is described as "*widows*." For those of them who were *entirely destitute* ("widows indeed") provision was made from the church fund, which was supplied by weekly or monthly contributions. Their names were enrolled on a list (1 Tim.: v, 9); they assumed some pledge or vow to remain single (1 Tim.: v, 12), and were set apart to Christian labors, as sisters of mercy, or deaconesses (1 Tim.: v, 10). At first, no limit was set to the *age* of these deaconesses. Some young women assumed the vow; but instances occurred

in which they proved false to it, exhibited levity of conduct, and incurred the *censure of the church*, for having "cast off their first faith (1 Tim. : v, 12) — i. e., violated their initiatory vow. Another inconvenience was, that these young widows, in gadding about (*περὶ ἐρχόμενας*) THE houses of their district, became mere tattlers and gossips, "speaking things which they ought not."

These abuses seem to have led the apostle to direct that no widow should subsequently be taken on the list under sixty years of age, and who was not already practiced in works of Christian charity. The younger widows he advises to marry, and devote themselves to raising up families, and other domestic employments (1 Tim. : v, 14). Widows who were dependent on any believer, whether man or woman, were to be cared for by them, so that the church should not be burdened. (*Vide* Con. and How. on 1 Tim. : v, 16.)

NOTE RESPECTING WIDOWS. — It may excite surprise that *widows* seem to have been so numerous in the apostolic churches. This is probably explained by the prevailing customs in regard to divorce. Although *polygamy* (strictly so called) did not prevail in the Roman Empire, yet the liberty of divorce was such, that many men had successively married and repudiated two, or even six or more wives. These divorced wives were the "widows" of living husbands (*ζηρᾶι* — deserted and afflicted persons), and had a just claim upon them for support; and when such a polygamist was converted, the church expected him to provide for them. (1 Tim. : v, 16.) Under the Christian law, he could only live with *one* as his wife; the rest were his "widows," until, as advised by the apostle, they contracted a new and lawful marriage. Were a Mormon "elder" converted, there

would be a number of such "widows" in his family, all of whom would have a moral claim upon him for support, while only one could be his wife. The "*widows indeed*" (1 Tim. : v, 3) may be such as had actually lost their husbands by death, and had no one to look to for support. These were to be "honored" — i. e., provided with a maintenance by being taken on the church list, and employed in charitable works, as deaconesses. It was required that they should have been each "the wife of one man" (1 Tim. : v, 9) — i. e., not women who had been recklessly divorced and then unlawfully married again. In the same manner, it was required (1 Tim. : III, 2) that "a bishop should be the husband of one wife" — that is, one who had not been guilty of unlawful divorces, which left more than one woman with moral claims upon him as her husband. A *bishop* must, in this respect, be *blameless*. (See Con. and How., II, 452, note.)

The activities of the "church widows" were to be exclusively private or domestic. On the ground of that inferiority implied in the fact that woman was created second and sinned first, Paul forbids that she should teach or usurp authority (such as teaching implies) over man. (1 Tim. : II, 12.) If it is said that woman may not *teach*, indeed, but may, in public, *exhort*, relate experience, &c., we observe, that Paul further (1 Cor. : XIV, 34) requires women to keep absolute silence in the churches. If it is still said that woman may, indeed, be bound to keep silence in the public assemblies, but may take part in social religious worship, we reply, that the "churches" (ἐκκλησίαι) referred to by Paul were such small neighborhood meetings as could find place in the *rooms* (ὀίκοις) of private houses. (See No. 2 ; note.) If

women might not teach or speak in these social meetings, much less might they in large assemblies.

SEC. XXIII. — CONSTITUTION OF THE PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH.

Presbyterianism is the government of the church by teaching and ruling presbyters, acting in courts of review and control. The lowest of these courts is composed of the teaching and ruling presbyters of a particular church; the next, the presbytery, consists of the presbyters of a number of local churches; the synod is composed of several presbyteries; the fourth and highest is the general assembly, composed of representatives from all the presbyteries. Each of these courts has jurisdiction over the next lower. Presbyterianism affirms (Form of Gov., ch. XII, note), "that the several different congregations of believers, taken collectively, constitute one Church of Christ, called emphatically *the church*; that a larger part of the church, or a representative of it, should govern a smaller: that, in like manner, a representative of the *whole* should determine in regard to every part — that is, that *a majority shall govern*, and, consequently, that appeals may be carried from lower to higher judicatories, till they be finally decided by the collected wisdom and united voice of the whole church."

This system differs from Prelacy, on the one hand, which devolves the government of the church wholly on bishops, as a grade in the ministry superior, by divine right, to presbyters; and from Independency, on the other, which assigns the government of the church exclusively to the membership of each local congregation. The former system denies the parity of the clergy; the latter, the unity of the church. Presbyterianism

alone, of all existing forms of church government, is in perfect harmony with the representative character of our political system. It is ecclesiastical republicanism, while all other systems tend either towards a despotic centralization, or a loose democracy. Inasmuch as the Form of Government, above quoted, speaks of "the several different congregations of believers as making up one Church of Christ, called emphatically *the church*," &c., it might be inferred that Presbyterianism claims to be that one true church, and requires to be exclusively recognized as such. But the "*preliminary principles*" to the Form of Government expressly recognize the right of "every other church, or association of particular churches," to settle their form of polity and terms of communion for themselves, and recommends all such to exercise mutual forbearance towards each other. The Presbyterian system is no doubt set forth as most in harmony with the Scriptures: * but no hint is given of any wish to obtrude it upon others, or to deny that their churches are also true Churches of Christ. How great should be the geographical area, or how extensive the organization of "*the church*," in its Presbyterian form, is nowhere suggested, that point being left to be decided by providential events. A limit is necessarily imposed by the conditions of human nature and society. No denomination can be universal: but all true Christians should recognize their *essential* unity, under all their circumstantial diversities, and confess that they make but a part of the one universal Church of Christ.

* It must seem singular that the "Presbyterian Church" has entirely waived the title of "pre-byter" for its ministry, and also the title of *elder*, except for its ruling eldership. The Form of Government, ch. iv, note, recommends the title of "*bishop*" as one particularly expressive of the pastor's duty as an *overseer* of the flock, and one under which the office and character of the Gospel minister is fully described.

SEC. XXIV. — ADVANTAGES OF PRESBYTERIANISM OVER
INDEPENDENCY. .

The essential principle of Independency is, that there is no other *church* than the local Christian society, and that each society possesses, exclusively, all church power necessary to the well being of the body, including ordination, government and discipline — i. e., it denies, *in terms*, the existence of any visible church, catholic or denominational. There is *no church*, but only *churches*. According to this disintegrating theory, the pastor is a member of his own or some other local church: discipline is administered by the whole body of the brotherhood, and no appeal lies from their decisions to any other church or body of churches. The defects of this system are such that it is found impossible, in practice, to limit it to the demands of the theory. A church cannot live as a mere ecclesiastical atom, without support, direction and restraint by other churches. Independency, therefore, has relinquished the right of ordination by the particular church, and has relegated this work to an association of pastors. Instead of conducting discipline by the whole brotherhood, it, sometimes at least, devolves this work on a standing committee. It provides for organization by associations of pastors, by consociation of churches, and by national and state conventions. All these are declared, by Congregational authorities, to be “gross departures from the principles of the system, and only ‘Presbyterianism in disguise’” (Sawyer). Even as thus modified, Congregationalism, having no written constitution, and no system of appeals, presents but a feeble safeguard for the rights of church members, for the maintenance of truth, or the enforcement of discipline. The

attempt[†] to realize the *unity* of the church, contrary to its own fundamental principles, and secure efficiency of action by borrowing features from another system, is a confession of its own error and feebleness.

Presbyterianism, on the other hand, contains within itself all the elements necessary to the most efficient working of the system. It confesses the unity of the church,* and gives expression to it by an organization which binds the parts, from a church session to the General Assembly, into a living whole. Instead of having the entire brotherhood agitated with each case of discipline, it is managed by a small number of discreet and judicious persons, who are usually able, without publicity, to heal differences and prevent scandal. In case of wrong in judgment, or error in doctrine, an appeal lies to the representatives of a number of churches — a presbytery; then to a still higher court — a synod; and, finally, if necessary, to the represented wisdom of the whole church: it being a fundamental principle of presbytery, as of our national government, that the people, by the voice of their representatives, shall decide in all cases, *under a constitution*. No system can be devised better fitted to maintain truth, defend character and enforce righteous discipline than this.†

SEC. XXV. — NATURE AND METHOD OF ORDINATION.

Ordination, which is induction to the office of the Christian ministry, is performed by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery, according to Scripture example. It is immaterial whether all the presbytery lay on hands,

* In Acts, ix, 31: "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea, Galilee and Samaria, and were edified." &c. The Sinaitic, Vatican and Alexandrian MSS. read: "Then had THE CHURCH rest, and was edified," &c.

† See Appendix G.

or only one or more, by the authority of the whole body. The effect of ordination is not to impart to the subject any “*special grace*,” or to impress on him any mysterious and indelible “character of office,” but only to bestow on him, by the authority of the church, a *formal commission* for the work of the ministry. It is on this ground, that ordinations in the Episcopal Church may be regarded as valid. viz. : not that the bishop has any divine right to act, or any apostolic grace to bestow, more than any other minister, but that he is authorized by the church he serves to commission others to preach the Gospel, and that the ordinations are *really* by the hands of a presbytery.*

The word “*ordain*” is used in our version to represent twelve Greek verbs: but only two of them relate to the ordination of Christian presbyters. They are *καθίστημι*, meaning to appoint or constitute, and *χειροτονέω*, to elect or designate to office by laying on of hands. Neither of these words suggests the idea of anything more than a simple appointment to the work of the ministry by competent authority (Jacobs, pp. 117, 118). That ordination confers any supernatural power or grace, or stamps any “indelible character,” is a superstitious idea, having no warrant in Scripture. Ordination merely amounts to a *commission* given by the church to a certain person to do a certain work, and the commission is naturally revocable whenever the ability or disposition to do the work ceases. Provision should, therefore, be made, under suitable cautions, for the demission of the ministry in such cases. The false conception of ordination as “a sacrament,” impressing an ineffaceable character on the subject, and making him “*once a minister, always a minister*,”

* See Appendix K.

is burdensome, alike to many individual ministers and to the church herself.* (Jacobs, p. 131.)

This dogma which we have inherited from the Church of Rome, was rejected by leading English reformers. Dr. Field, the friend of Richard Hooker, and highest Episcopal authority against the Church of Rome, teaches that "ordination is merely for the sake of order." ("On the church:" Hunt, I, 118.) The continental ordination by presbyters, subserving this end, was, in his view, valid ordination.

SEC. XXVI. — THE CHRISTIAN MINISTRY NOT A PRIESTHOOD.

In the Romish and Episcopal Churches, it is taught that the Christian ministry is a *priesthood*; and in the former, universally, and by a party in the latter, it is held that Christian worship includes what is correlative to a priesthood, viz.: *an altar*, and the offering upon it of a true and proper sacrifice for the sins of men. This idea took possession of the Christian mind very early and in the third century is found well developed. As there was a priesthood under the Law, with sacrifices and a hierarchy, it was inferred there must also be under the Gospel. Analogy was drawn from the temple service in favor of an altar, sacrificing priests, and a three-fold constitution of the ministry. Of the Christian fathers, Ignatius, Tertullian and Cyprian were particularly influential in encouraging this idea, and out of this grew the whole sacerdotal system of the Church of Rome. The Christian presbyter became a *sacerdos* — a *ἱερεύς*; the communion table, an *altar*; the devotional service, a mass; the bread and wine became the true body and blood of

* See Appendix R.

Christ, which was daily offered up to the Father for the sins of the living and the dead. The result was that complete system of sacramentalism, which enslaves the church under the hands of the clergy : substitutes a magical charm, or *opus operatum*, of baptism and the Lord's Supper, for the exercise of the Christian affections : and resolves the whole Christian system into a law of works and carnal ordinances. For all this there is no warrant whatever in the New Testament. The Christian elder is never called a priest : nor is any analogy suggested between the Levitical orders or service and the Christian ministry or worship. No such analogy exists. On the contrary, the resemblance is close between the order of the synagogue and that of the church : and we have already seen that the constitution of the latter was organized on that of the former. This disagreement and resemblance appears in the following particulars :

1. The names of the office-bearers in the church, before the third century, were those of the synagogue, not of the temple.

2. *The places of worship*: Only one temple, but many synagogues and churches.

3. No different degrees of sanctity in the synagogues, or in the churches.

4. The services in the *synagogue*, but not in the temple, corresponded with those of the Christian Churches.

5. Vestments were employed in the temple : not in synagogues nor churches.

6. A hereditary priestly class in the temple ; none in the synagogues or churches.

7. Service in the temple limited to a certain age ; not so in the synagogues or churches.

8. Bodily defects excluded from the temple service; not from the synagogues or churches.

9. "In the temple, there was no pulpit; in the synagogues and churches, no altar."

10. The temple priests were formally anointed and consecrated; nothing of this in the synagogues or churches.

11. The Epistle to the Hebrews is an elaborate argument to prove that all sacrifices and priesthoods have passed away, being summed up in those of the Lord Jesus Christ. The only *priests*, under the New Testament, are the entire body of believers; and the only sacrifices are spiritual sacrifices of prayer and praise. The sacerdotal and sacramental system, therefore, is an attempt to vacate the sole priesthood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and to impose on the church the yoke of the abrogated Judaism. (See *Vitringa de Syn. Vet.*: quoted by Jacobs, pp. 96-110.)

SEC. XXVII. — DOCTRINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH AS TO THE SACRAMENTS.

The Presbyterian Church teaches that there are only two sacraments of the New Testament—baptism and the Lord's Supper: that the latter is to be administered to believers, and the former to believers and their children. It holds that these sacraments do not *infuse* but only *signify* and *represent* the grace of regeneration and sanctification. They are only made effectual to the elect. "The efficacy of baptism is not tied to that moment of time wherein it is administered; yet, notwithstanding, by the right use of this ordinance, the grace promised is not only offered, but really exhibited and conferred by the Holy Ghost, to such (whether of

age or infants) as that grace belongeth unto, according to the counsel of God's own will, *in His appointed time.*" (Conf. : XXVIII, 6.)

"Worthy receivers, outwardly partaking of the visible elements in this sacrament (the Lord's Supper) do then also inwardly, by faith, really and indeed, yet not carnally and corporeally, but spiritually receive and feed upon Christ crucified, and all the benefits of His death; the body and blood of Christ being then not corporeally or carnally in, with, or under the bread and wine, yet as really, but spiritually, present to the faith of believers in that ordinance, as the elements themselves are to their outward senses." (Conf. : XXIX, 7.)*

These sacraments, therefore, are not effectual *mechanically*, or by any "*opus operatum*" of the ordinances themselves, but only by an *opus operantis* of the Holy Spirit attending the administration.

Baptism is not a saving ordinance, nor is the defect of baptism fatal to the soul, as held by Augustine and the whole Romish Church. It has no effect to wash away sin, either original or actual. The phrase "*washing of regeneration*" (Titus : III, 5), may be properly interpreted, "that washing which *signifies* regeneration:" and the passage (Acts : XXII, 16), "*Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins,*" is merely the language of Ananias, and not, necessarily, to be understood as conveying Christian doctrine. (Hodge, III, 598.) There is no "transubstantiation," or special sacredness in the water employed, as there is no change whatever in the elements employed in the Lord's Supper.

The Church of Rome and that portion of the Episcopal Church which sympathizes closely with it hold, that

* See Appendix Q.

the sacraments, properly administered in the church catholic, are the certain and necessary channels of grace to the soul. Baptism is in the strictest sense "regeneration;" and justification is a progressive *work*, which is carried on to the end of life, through union with the church and partaking of her sacraments.*

These views made a part of that "sacramental system" which so early invaded the Christian Church, and which to so great an extent identified the Christian life with a round of external performances. It was repudiated by the reformers in favor of a religion consisting of union with the church catholic, orthodoxy, the personal exercise of repentance towards God, and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, and the cultivation of all Christian virtues. The reformers, indeed, often employed language properly belonging to the sacramental system, particularly as to the efficacy of baptism; but the evangelical features of the Calvinistic theology, which they adopted, steadily overpowered the sacramental, and their characteristic dogma became justification by faith, and not justification by outward ordinances.

As early as Augustine, a tendency appeared to enlarge the number of the sacraments; but it was not until the twelfth century that they were definitely fixed at seven, viz.: Baptism, confirmation, the eucharist, penance, matrimony, orders and extreme unction, which are alleged to correspond to the seven necessities of man, viz.: Birth, growth, nourishment, healing, the family, government, and death. Of these, matrimony and orders are necessary for *some*, and the rest for *all* believers.

* See Appendix L.

SEC. XXVIII. — DOCTRINE OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
AS TO INFANT CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The doctrine of the standards on this subject is, "that the children of believing parents are members by birth of the church catholic, and are to be baptized in recognition of that fact. They are also members by birth of the particular church to which their parents belong, and are under its watch and care." They are thus "young Christians." "They are to be instructed in the Scriptures and the faith of the church; and, on arriving at years of discretion, if they are free from scandal, appear sober and steady, and have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, it is their duty and privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."

"The years of discretion in young Christians cannot be precisely fixed. This must be left to the prudence of the eldership. The officers of the church are the judges of the qualifications of *candidates* for communion, and of the time when it is proper to admit young Christians to the Lord's table. Before being admitted, they shall be examined as to their knowledge and piety." (Directory : IX, 1, 3.)

Baptized children, therefore, are "young Christians," and members of the church. They do not need to "join the church" in maturer years, being already within it; but their coming to the table of the Lord is conditioned on their "knowledge and piety." The sum of the knowledge required is, that (having been taught the catechism, the apostles' creed, and the Lord's prayer,) they can "discern the Lord's body;" (1 Cor: XI, 29,) that is, can understand the nature of the ordinance as a Chris-

tian sacrament.* The sum of the "*piety*" required is that they are "free from scandal, and appear sober and steady." How far "young Christians" possess these qualifications, and also what is the "age of discretion" in each instance, is "left to the prudence of the eldership," and to be ascertained by examination. But none are to be excluded from any supposed defect of a "religious experience," or inability to give a history of their conversion. Having the above-named qualifications, and on the ground of these alone, "it is their duty and privilege to come to the Lord's table." The opinion of the eldership that they are or are not "*regenerated*" has nothing to do with the question. Nothing should *forbid* a "young Christian" to come to the Lord's table, which would not equally *exclude* one already a communicant; but no communicant is to be excluded from any mere suspicion or belief that he is not truly "*regenerated*." (See Hodge's Theology, part III, ch. XX, sec. 11, 12.) The sacraments, though not the necessary or exclusive channels for conveying grace to the soul, are "means of

* That "*discerning the Lord's body*" does not mean having a true spiritual experience, or being regenerated persons, appears: 1. Because this is evidently *not* the meaning of the passage 1 Cor. : xi, 29. The sin of the 'orinthian communicants was *not* that they were unregenerate, but that they attended on the Lord's Supper in a riotous and profane manner, taking no concern to distinguish between it and a common feast. 2. This interpretation is inconsistent with the language of the Directory, which nowhere makes "regeneration" a condition of coming to the Lord's Supper. "The profane, ignorant and scandalous, and those that secretly indulge in any known sin," are not to come. Those are invited, who, (1) being sensible of their lost and helpless state by sin, depend on the atonement of Christ for pardon. (2) Those who desire to renounce their sins, and are determined to lead a holy and Godly life. (3) Those who, being instructed in the Gospel doctrine, have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body." (Directory, VIII, 4.) It would be clearly absurd to interpret a "*competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body*," as meaning a true inward religious experience. "Free from scandal, sober and steady, and are *truly regenerate!*" The latter requirement would make the others quite superfluous. In chap. IX, 1, the language is, "sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body." Clearly, it cannot mean sufficient *regeneration*.

grace ;” and persons receiving either the one or the other of them while still unregenerate, may be brought by means of them to a saving experience of the truth.*

These same views of the relation of baptized children to the church were affirmed by the earliest New England pilgrims. The Plymouth and Salem churches both agreed “that the children of the faithful were church members with their parents, and that their baptism was a seal of their being so ; only before their admission to fellowship in a particular church, it was judged necessary that, being free from scandal, they should be examined by the elders of the church, upon whose approbation of their fitness they should publicly and personally own the covenant.” (Magnalia, I, 67.)

“The ministration of the table should never be without a sharp examination going before, chiefly of them whose life, ignorance, or religion is suspected. Who cannot say the Lord’s prayer, the articles of the faith, and the sum of the law, should not be admitted.” (First Book of Discipline of the Scottish Kirk, Art. XIII.)

SEC. XXX. — DOCTRINE OF THE FORM OF GOVERNMENT IN REGARD TO THE AUTHORITY OF THE CHURCH.

The doctrine of the Presbyterian Church on this subject is, that all church power is only ministerial and declarative. The Holy Scriptures are the only rule of faith and manners ; and no church judicatory ought to pretend to make laws to bind the conscience by their own authority. Their decisions should be founded on the revealed will of God (Ch , I, 7). These principles require the closest possible conformity to the Scripture platform of worship and discipline, consistent with a due regard to the modi-

* See Appendix Q.

fications imposed by changes of times and circumstances.

The inspired writers have not gone into details on these points. Public worship consists of prayer, praise, reading the Scriptures, preaching, administering sacraments, &c. But the method of performing these services, as, *e. g.*, whether prayer should be free or liturgical, whether praise by the use of versified hymns and the aid of instruments, the frequency and order of reading the Scriptures, the times and manner of administering baptism and the Lord's Supper, preaching with or without certain vestments, &c., these, and many other points are left to the discretion of each church. If a church ordain that the Lord's Supper shall be administered once a month, or only once a year, and shall be received *kneeling*, it merely exercises the right of *expounding* Christ's laws. But if it ordain that the sacrament shall be received only *under one kind*, or that ministers shall not *marry*, it usurps the power of *making* laws for the church.

This principle allows to each church "the right of fixing on its own terms of communion, and the qualifications of its ministers and members, as well as the whole system of its internal government, which Christ hath appointed," (Form of Gov. : I, 2,) and it requires the members of each church to submit to the *not unscriptural* laws and usages of that church.

To the same effect is the doctrine of the XXXIX articles. Art. 34. "Traditions and ceremonies have always varied in the church, and may be changed according to the diversity of countries, times, and men's manners, so that nothing be ordained against God's word. Whoever, on the ground of his private judgment, shall violate such ceremonies, ordained by common authority

and not repugnant to the Word of God, ought to be rebuked openly. Every particular or national church hath authority to ordain, change and abolish rites of the church, ordained only by man's authority, so that all things be done to edifying."

In accordance with this is the argument of Richard Hooker, in the 3d Book of his Eccles. Polity. Against the Puritans, who held that nothing was allowable, either in worship or discipline, for which a plain warrant could not be found in Scripture, he argued that the Scripture laws on these subjects are, of necessity, both general and liable to modification: that while the *faith* is one and unchangeable, polity and ceremonies may be various, according to the changing conditions of society: and that the ritual of the Anglican Church being only an exposition of Christ's laws, requiring propriety and decorum in worship, was binding on the conscience of all its members.

This celebrated argument, therefore, did not proceed on the claim of a divine right for Episcopacy, either as respects its polity or its ritual; but only on the right of each church to provide for itself in these respects, *in accordance* with the general principles, and not in contradiction to any express provision of the Word of God.

But Hooker maintained the right and duty of the civil magistrate to enforce the decisions of the church, by pains and penalties, against all dissenters. His work, therefore, embraces the detestable principle of religious persecution.

SEC. XXXI. — DOCTRINE OF THE DIRECTORY IN REGARD TO PUBLIC PRAYER.

The Directory for Worship (Ch., v, 3) observes, that, "although we do not approve, as is well known, of *con-*

fining ministers to set or fixed forms of prayer, yet it is the indispensable duty of every minister to prepare and qualify himself for this part of his duty. He ought, by a thorough acquaintance with the Holy Scriptures, by reading the best writers on the subject, by meditation, and by a life of communion with God in secret, to acquire both the *spirit* and the *gift* of prayer. Not only so, but when he is to enter on particular acts of worship, he should endeavor to compose his spirit, and to *digest his thoughts* for prayer, that it may be performed with dignity and propriety, and that he may not disgrace that important service by mean, irregular, or extravagant effusions."

But there is nothing in the constitution or the history of the Presbyterian Church to forbid the use of a judicious liturgy. The early Churches of Switzerland and France performed public prayer in this mode, using a service drawn up by John Calvin. The early Scottish Kirk employed a liturgy prepared by John Knox.* Richard Baxter prepared a liturgy to be used by the united Presbyterians and Episcopalians of England. The Reformed (Dutch) Church has a full liturgy, which is usually employed, however, only in the administration of the sacraments. When, after the close of the Revolutionary War (1787), the Presbyterian Church (like the Episcopal) revised her standards, a committee composed of four of the most eminent ministers of the church reported to the Synod of New York and New Jersey a full Form of Prayer, covering all the parts of the service; but this did not secure the approval of the Synod. (See *Eutaxia*, p. 228. *Life of Dr. Green*, p. 184.) The Directory contains ample instructions as to the mode in which prayer, read-

* See Appendix T.

ing the Scripture, administration of the sacraments, marriage, baptismal services, &c., are to be conducted.*

SEC. XXXII. — ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF LITURGICAL PRAYER.

The practice of the Christian Church, universally, from the 4th to the 16th century, and of a large proportion even of the Protestant Churches since, has been, and is, to conduct public prayer by means of prescribed forms. Only the dissenters in England, the Presbyterians everywhere, and the Baptist, Methodist, and other non-prelatical bodies in America, make use of free prayer. And even the Methodists, the Reformed (Dutch), the German Reformed and the Lutheran Churches make use, in part, of a liturgy. It is especially characteristic of the Episcopal Church. In favor of this method is alleged :

1. The "propriety and dignity" with which prayer is performed by this mode. These are qualities not to be undervalued, in the public worship of God. It is admitted, that in free prayer, they may sometimes be lacking, and that instead of them may be found "mean, irregular and extravagant effusions." Few ministers will carefully prepare themselves by the methods recommended for this part of the service. It is too often the case that hesitation, repetitiousness, infelicities of expression, meagreness of thought, lack of Scriptural phraseology, a rhetorical and declamatory style, the omission of appropriate topics, excessive length, etc., make non-liturgical prayers unedifying.†

* See Appendix L.

† "The essentially intellectual character of an extemporaneous composition, spoken to the Creator with the consciousness that many of His creatures are listening, to criticise or to admire, is the great argument for set forms of prayer." (The Guardian Angel, by O. W. Holmes, p. 119.)

A Liturgy, on the other hand, is drawn from the whole liturgical wealth of the church; from the prayers of the early fathers and later divines; from the works of the best devotional writers, etc., in a dignified and Scriptural style, and with the use of the best and most important topics.

2. It is claimed there is an advantage in the worshiper's being familiar with the succession and routine of the prayers. The Presbyterian, in church, is entirely dependent on the discretion of the officiating minister. He does not know, from one sentence to another, what objects he is to be called to pray for; and he can pray for no object, however important, (as, *e. g.*, for rulers,) which the minister does not introduce. On the other hand, the worshiper with a liturgy knows in advance what are the petitions in which he is to join, and can conform his sentiments to them.

3. There is an influence favorable to Christian unity and sympathy in having all the parts of the church join in the same prayer, at the same time. The whole church, throughout a kingdom or a continent, is pouring forth the voice of worship at once, in the same confessions, petitions and thanksgivings. This nurses a feeling of Christian fellowship, and makes the liturgy, which is the means of it, very dear to the heart.

4. The use of a *book* may be favorable to concentration of mind in prayer.

5. The spoken Amen! is an impressive and Scriptural form of assent to the prayer, by the people.*

Against these advantages may be set off,

* In answer to an overture in regard to responsive and ritualistic services, the General Assembly, of 1874, replied, that "the practice of responsive service in the public worship of the sanctuary is without warrant in the New Testament, and is unwise and impolitic, in view of its inevitable tendency to destroy uniformity in our mode of worship!"

1. The want of adaptation, in a liturgy, to the varying wants and circumstances of a congregation. Events often occur calling for particular notice in prayer. The condition of the local church and of the church at large varies. This objection might be obviated by occasional revisions of the prayer book, and especially by leaving a part of the service for free prayer, as formerly practiced in the English Church.

2. The tendency to *formalism*, which is inseparable from any rigid and unvarying liturgy. The forms come to be regarded as of the essence of the worship, and are held in superstitious veneration. Their use dries up the facility of devotional expression, and becomes the substitute for social and even for personal prayer. Liturgical churches have no prayer meetings.

3. The use of a liturgy tends to ultra-conservatism, and a looking to the past for the ideal condition of the church. Liturgists are prone to consider their own forms as absolutely perfect, and to discard the thought of any improvement on the wisdom of their compilers. This paralyzes a church's energies, makes her narrow and illiberal, and reduces her efficiency in every department of active Christian work.

4. A rigid liturgy interferes with the communion of saints, and forbids co-operation among Christian Churches.

A judicious liturgy, drawn from the best sources, liable to occasional amendment, and leaving part of the service for free prayer, might be an improvement on any existing method of conducting public devotion.

SEC. XXXIII.—HISTORY OF THE BOOK OF COMMON PRAYER.

Upon the accession of Edward VI, (1547) and under the influence of Arch-bishop Cranmer, the Reformation

in England came forth into recognized existence, and measures were at once taken to divest public worship of the more offensive features of Romanism. The English clergy had all, of course, received their ordination as Romish priests, and most of them still clung to the old superstitions. The Parliament, the young and pious sovereign, his uncle the Earl of Hertford, (the regent) and Cranmer, were zealous for reformation. Intimate relations were maintained with continental reformers, several of whom, as Peter Martyr, Bucer, and Calvin himself, were invited to aid in Protestantizing the English Church. In 1548 all popish rites and shows were forbidden, and images removed from the churches. The first book of common prayer was drawn up by a committee of the leading divines of the kingdom. It was founded on the Romish missals, or prayer books, of Sarum, York, Hereford and Bangor, leaving out the most objectionable features, but retaining the vestments, the altar, the cross in baptism, prayer for the dead, etc. Zealous individual reformers, as Ridley and Latimer, went further in their own dioceses, removing the altar, discarding the vestments, etc.; and, in 1552, shortly before the king's death, a second book of prayer was issued, by royal authority, embodying these and various other improvements, and leaving the Church of England reformed to a degree satisfactory to the best continental Protestants. Calvin thought the service still contained certain "tolerabiles ineptias." Cranmer, and Parker, his successor in the See of Canterbury, though preferring Episcopacy, fully recognized the validity of Presbyterian ordinations, and corresponded with Calvin with a view of uniting all the Reformed Churches in one communion. This was to be on the basis of a compromise which

retained Episcopacy, but discarded everything in it that was objectionable in the continental churches. This plan failed from the death of Calvin, in 1561. (Hunt's Hist. : I, 41.)

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth, the prayer book was brought back again to the standard of Edward VIth's, first book; the images were replaced in the churches; the old Romish ceremonies restored, and the prayer against the "Bishop of Rome and his detestable enormities" struck out. The policy of the queen was to conciliate her Romish subjects, who were a formidable party, at the expense of the Puritans, whom she particularly disliked, though the latter were quiet and loyal subjects, while the former never ceased plotting against her throne and life. So things remained through her reign, and those of James and Charles I.

On the restoration of monarchy (1661) a conference ("Savoy Conference") was held by royal authority, between a body of Episcopal and Presbyterian divines, at which the latter consented to accept the book of common prayer, with certain amendments, as respects vestments, signing with the cross, pronouncing the absolution, the baptismal and burial service, &c. These being rejected, Mr. Baxter proposed his "Reformed Liturgy," which was also refused. The Episcopal hierarchy, triumphant and vindictive, showed no disposition to accommodate the Presbyterians, who had aided so influentially in restoring monarchy and prelacy. Instead of yielding to any demands in the direction of liberality, they made the service more rigid than before, introducing some changes expressly to disown Presbyterian views. During the time of the commonwealth, great numbers of the parish priests had been displaced, as ignorant and scandalous, or

sedition; earnest and devout ministers, mostly Episcopal by ordination, though Presbyterian in sentiment, had taken their places. These were now required to subscribe to the *act of uniformity*; submit, if they had been ordained by presbyters, to re-ordination, and confess the unlawfulness of their previous conduct. This led to the "Black Bartholomew" (24 of Aug., 1662), when 2,000 such ministers quitted their livings in a body.

Immediately after the English Revolution of 1688, an attempt was made, with the sanction of King William and under the guidance of the liberal Arch-bishop Tillotson, at such modifications of the prayer book as would result in reconciling all dissenters to the Established Church. Through the bigotry of the high church clergy, this also failed, and no attempt has since been made to amend the liturgy. After the establishment of American Independence, some slight changes, adapted to the changed political condition, were made. The Athanasian creed, against the strenuous opposition of Bishop Seabury, but in accordance with the wish of the devout and charitable Bishop White, was dropped. Other changes have been urgently pressed by the low church party, but have only been obtained by the secession under Bishop Cummins, 1873.*

* It has been repeatedly said, and even by some recent Episcopal writers of high standing, who cannot have taken the trouble to refer to Calvin's writings themselves, that the Genevan reformer preferred the system of government by bishops, and would gladly have secured the succession from the Anglican Episcopate for his own church, if possible. The statement must appear essentially ludicrous to all persons, even moderately versed in the history of the Reformation, and is at once disproved by reading, in its full connection, the passage relied on in proof. It is found in the treatise, *De necessitate reformandæ ecclesiæ*, addressed to the Emperor and the Catholic Princes, as an apology for the Reformation. It is occupied exclusively with the argument against the Church of Rome, not even making an allusion to the Episcopacy of the English Church. "Our adversaries allege," he says, "that all heresy and schism result from neglecting to go back to the source of truth, and seek instruction from the divinely ordained head-

SEC. XXXIV. — DEDUCTION OF PRESBYTERIAN ORDINATIONS IN AMERICA.

The existing body of Presbyterian ministers in America, derive their ordinations from the Anglican Church, through three separate lines :

1. Through the Puritans of New England. — These consisted of Non-conformist members of the English Church, who fled to this country to escape the persecution of the bishops. The first colonists brought no minister with them, the Rev. Mr. Robinson having elected to stay with that portion of the flock which remained in Holland. But, in 1629, three English clergymen arrived in New England, viz. : Rev. Ralph Smith, at Plymouth, and Rev. Messrs. Higginson and Shelton, at Salem. In the course of a few years, more than seventy other Non-conformist English clergy came over. All these had received their own ordination at the hands of English Bishops ; but, agreeably to the Presbyterian principles

Talem nobis exhibeant hierarchiam, &c. ; let them show us a hierarchy in which the bishops shall so rule as to recognize, at the same time, their subjection to Christ ; shall depend on Him as their only Head, and derive from Him all their authority ; shall cherish between themselves fraternal concord, and be bound together by no other tie than holding the truth in common ; then, indeed, I will confess that those who would not reverently submit to it, would deserve any anathema whatever. But this fraudulent *sham* of a hierarchy, they make so much of, in what single feature does it resemble a genuine Episcopacy ? The Bishop of Rome, governing without law, like a tyrant, yea, with a more reckless license than any tyrant, holds the headship. The rest of the ecclesiastical body is fashioned after his style, and not after the model of Christ." &c. The spirit of the whole passage is, that if the Pope and the Romish Bishops had been humble, devout, Christian men, holding the truth, and watching over the flock in the spirit of the Great Bishop and Shepherd of souls, the Reformation would have been unjustifiable, and the Protestants inexcusable schismatics. On that absurd supposition, we may easily affirm the same thing. As Calvin here denies that the existence of a true church depends on its union with the Church of Rome, so he elsewhere, particularly in his *Vera ecclesie reformanda ratio* discards emphatically the idea that it depends on the ministry or on an apostolic succession. The church is perpetuated all the same, he says, however the succession of bishops may be broken.

they had adopted, they felt no hesitation in perpetuating the ministry in America without the aid of bishops. These English presbyters had, probably, been ordained in the early part of the century; and, therefore, any American minister who could trace back through New England the line of ordinations ending in himself, would find it ran into the English Episcopate, somewhere from 1600 to 1630.

2. Through the Presbyterians of the commonwealth.— Up to the year 1643, though many of the English clergy were of Presbyterian sentiments, there had been no ordinations in England except by the hands of bishops. On the 5th of November of that year, (the civil war then raging, and Long Parliament being in session,) Episcopacy was abolished, by concurrent action of the Lords and Commons. The bishops all ranged themselves on the side of the king. The universities were closed. Many of the clergy deserted their parishes, and joined the royal army. No candidates for the ministry came forward. The consequence was, that many of the parishes were soon left without clergy; and of the parish ministers who remained, many were worse than none, being ignorant and scandalous in life, and equally zealous for the king, and against the liberties of the people, with the others. Under these circumstances, the parliament directed the Westminster Assembly to consider and report on the validity of ordination without bishops. After full discussion, they reported in favor of Presbyterian ordination. Thereupon, a committee was appointed of twenty-three presbyters, to examine and ordain candidates for the ministry. All persons ordained by them, or a quorum of them, (7) were to be reputed ministers, in full standing of the “Church of England.” These twen-

ty-three ordaining presbyters had themselves been regularly ordained by bishops. It is at this point, therefore, that Presbyterian ordinations began in England. The succession was preserved, was transmitted to this country, and has been perpetuated ever since. Any Presbyterian minister who could trace his "ecclesiastical pedigree" back through this line, would find it running into the English Episcopate somewhere from 1620 to 1640 — that is, in the persons of the bishops who ordained any of these twenty three ordainers.

3. Through the Scotch-Irish presbyters. — Protestantism gained almost no footing in Ireland, until near the end of the 16th century. To prevent its introduction from Scotland, a law was passed in the third year of Philip and Mary, (1556) forbidding the Scotch to settle in Ireland, or to intermarry with the natives. This law remained in force throughout the reign of Elizabeth, and was only repealed in 1607. The Scotch Presbyterians then began to settle in the north of Ireland. At the same time the Non-conformist ministers of London (who were Presbyterian in principle) engaged zealously in the work of missions among the Irish Papists. Many of the English Puritans took refuge in Ireland, and founded colonies, such as Londonderry and Enniskillen. Episcopacy, though long before established there, had but few adherents. The primate of Ireland was Dr. James Usher, distinguished for his learning and piety, and the highly liberal character of his views on church government. (Died, 1656.) The Scotch ministers who came into the north of Ireland were zealous Presbyterians, and unwilling, of course, to consent to Episcopal ordination. Through the wisdom of Archbishop Usher a "plan of comprehension" was adopted,

by which the Presbyterian clergy became incorporated into the Establishment, ordination being performed by the bishop and the presbytery together. Presbyterian ministers thus ordained, and refusing to use the liturgy, held livings, notwithstanding, in the Church of Ireland, and sat in convocation with the Episcopal clergy. A confession of faith was adopted, (drawn by Dr. Usher) embodying the rigid Calvinistic views of the English Puritans, (the nine Lambeth Articles of 1595) both with respect to doctrine and the church. These articles expressly recognized the ministry of every Christian Church, and made no mention of bishops or an apostolical succession. (Neal, I, 262. Articles, p. 448.)

During the commonwealth, Episcopacy was abolished in Ireland, as in England. The bishops ceased to exercise their functions, and ordination passed wholly into the hands of the presbyteries. On the restoration of monarchy, (1661) Episcopacy was restored. Those ministers who had been ordained by presbyters were required to be re-ordained by bishops, but without condemning their previous ordination as invalid. (Neal, II, 235.) The reason given was the requirements of the English canonical law. With this understanding, many of the Presbyterian clergy consented to re-ordination, and continued to hold livings in the Irish Church.

Others began to turn their eyes to America, and it was at this time that the earliest Irish Presbyterian ministers came over. The first Presbyterian Church in America was established at Rehoboth, in Maryland, in 1682, by Rev. Francis Mc Kemie, a member of the Lagan Presbytery, in Ireland. The first presbytery in America (Phil., 1705) was half composed of Scotch-Irish Presbyterian ministers.

Now, any Presbyterian minister who could trace back his line of ordination through these Scotch-Irish presbyters in this country, and their predecessors in Ireland during the commonwealth, would probably come in contact with an Episcopal bishop some time during the reign of Charles I, or, say from 1625 to 1645.

This deduction of Presbyterian ordinations is given, not because any consequence whatever is attached to it as affecting their validity, but simply as a matter of historical interest.

SEC. XXXV.— ORGANIZATION OF THE CHURCH OF ROME.

The Romish hierarchy consists of the pope, claiming to be the vicar of Christ on earth, and a body of bishops, priests and deacons, who derive their authority to minister in the church from the pope.

The claims of the pope to govern the whole church rest on two assumptions: (1) That Peter was prince of the apostles, and head of the church. (2) That Peter was the first bishop of Rome, and bequeathed his power to his successors. In support of the first assumption, it is said:

a. That in all the enumerations of the apostles, Peter is mentioned first, as, Mat. : x, 2; "Now, the names of the twelve apostles are these: The first, Simon, who is also called Peter." Mark : I, 36; "Simon, and they that were with him." Acts : II, 14; "Peter standing up with the eleven."

b. Christ declared that he would build His church on Peter, and give him the keys of the kingdom of heaven. (Mat. : XVI, 18.)

c. Christ taught out of Peter's ship. (Luke : v, 3.) Ordered the same tribute to be paid for himself and for

Peter. (Mat. : XVII, 2.) Prayed particularly for Peter, that his faith should not fail. (Luke : XXII, 32.)

d. Christ committed the care of his whole church to Peter, saying, "Feed my sheep. Feed my lambs." (John : XXI, 15.)

To this (admitting that Peter was the most forward and fluent of the twelve, and generally their spokesman) we reply :

e. That Christ expressly forbade any gradation of rank among the twelve. "One is your master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." (Mat. : 23-8.)

f. The twelve knew nothing of any primacy in Peter. The dispute, who should be greatest, arose after the alleged appointment of Peter as their prince. (Mat. : XVI, 18.)

g. Paul declared that he was fully equal to Peter — "in nothing behind the very chiefest apostles," (2 Cor. : XII, 11,) and rebuked him to the face. (Gal. : II, 11.)

h. Peter had no idea of his own supremacy, nor ever claimed any.

i. Christ's words to Peter, "Feed my sheep," etc., instead of being his commission to rule over the whole church, were merely an assurance that he was not put out of the ministry for his sin, but might continue, being penitent, to exercise the office of a pastor.

k. Christ's Church was not to be built upon Peter, but upon the truth, which Peter had confessed, viz., the divine mission of Jesus as Messiah ($\xi\pi\iota$ ταῦτη τῆ πέτρα. Mat. : XVI, 18.) There is a true sense, however, in which the church was built upon Peter, viz., that he laid the foundations of it as an organized society, by receiving the first Jewish and the first Gentile converts to membership. (Acts : XI, 37, x, 44.)

l. The power of the keys was assigned to *all* the apostles, as much as to Peter. (Mat. : XVIII, 18.)

In support of the second assumption, viz., that Peter was bishop of Rome, it is said :

a. Peter wrote his 1st Epistle from Rome. 1 Peter : v, 13 ; "The church that is at Babylon," etc. Where the name of the metropolis of eastern Paganism is transferred to the metropolis of western Paganism, Babylon being the symbolic name for any great persecuting power. (See Rev. XIV, 8.)

b. Reliable tradition testifies that Peter was first bishop of Antioch, and then for twenty-five years bishop of Rome, where he suffered martyrdom, A. D. 67. To this, it is replied :

c. There is no evidence that Babylon, in 1 Peter : v, 13, is used symbolically for Rome. Peter's mission was to the Jews, of whom a large body dwelt in Mesopotamia, the region of which Babylon had formerly been the capital ; and though no city of that name then existed, others occupied the same general site. It is unlikely that, in sending a fraternal salutation, Peter should disguise the name of the church he represents under a symbolical alias.

d. The evidence that Peter was bishop of Rome is wholly worthless. No allusion to Peter occurs in the Epistle to the Romans, nor in the history of Paul's imprisonment at Rome. Therefore, he could not have been in Rome previous to A. D. 63. No writer of the first three centuries refers to any such thing. Irenæus speaks of the Church of Rome having been founded by Peter and Paul, which, as respects the latter, at least, we know was false. Eusebius (A. D. 325) (deriving his authority from the Pseudo-Clementine Recognitions —

a heretical romance of the latter part of the 2d century,) relates that Peter visited Rome in the reign of Claudius, (41-54) and founded the church there. Jerome (A. D. 400) is the first to speak of his having been bishop of that city. A well-supported tradition, however, given by Clemens Rom., Irenæus and Tertullian, testifies to his having suffered martyrdom at Rome.

e. The idea of any one of the apostles being bishop of a city is inconsistent with the character of their office, which was that of traveling missionaries, staying in any one place only long enough to plant the church, and provide for its training by a suitable native ministry.

The conclusion is, that the pretensions of the bishop of Rome are an imposture, without either Scriptural or historical evidence.

SEC. XXXVI.—PROCESS OF ORGANIZING A PARTICULAR CHURCH.

Ministers are often called, in our newer states and territories, to organize Presbyterian Churches. The method to be pursued is this :

1. In ordinary cases, application should be made to the proper presbytery for the appointment of a committee for this purpose. But any evangelist or pastor may organize a church, on his own responsibility.

2. At the time fixed, the minister or committee should receive the letters of those prepared to join on certificate, and then receive on examination any others, baptizing such as had not been baptized in infancy.

3. Those thus prepared to unite should then agree to walk together in a church relation, by giving their assent to the articles of the Christian faith, expressed in a compendious manner, and agreeing to a form of covenant,

after which they should join in celebrating the Lord's Supper.

4. The next step is the election and ordination of elders and deacons, according to the provisions in ch. XIII. of Form of Government. Members of the congregation, as well as of the church, may, if so agreed, vote in such election. (Digest, p. 51.) The election should be for a limited term. The office of ruling elder is perpetual, but the period of service depends on the choice of each congregation. (See Overture to Presbyteries, Min. of Gen'l Assembly, 1874, p. 61.)

5. The proceedings should then be reported to the presbytery, at its next meeting, with the request that the Church be taken under its care. According to article second of the platform for the reunion of the Presbyterian Church, as well as according to the dictates of expediency, no new church is to be organized on the accommodation-plan. (See New Digest, p. 53.)

APPENDIX.

APPENDIX.

A

THE ANGLICAN SUCCESSION — CONSECRATION OF PARKER.

At the accession of Queen Elizabeth, in November, 1558, there were only fourteen bishops left in England — all Catholics; thirteen of them refused to take the oath of supremacy, and were ejected from their dioceses, or “deprived.” The fourteenth, Anthony Kitchin, Bishop of Landaff, though still remaining in the Romish communion, took the oath of supremacy, and was allowed to keep his bishoprick. There was no arch-bishop in England, Cardinal Pole, Arch-bishop of Canterbury, having died the same day with Queen Mary — November 17th, 1558. Three of the old *titular* bishops of Edward VIth’s time, were still living, but out of office, having been “deprived” by Queen Mary.

Queen Elizabeth was extremely anxious to restore a regular Episcopate for the English Church; she fixed on Matthew Parker, who had been chaplain of her mother (Anne Boleyn), for Arch-bishop of Canterbury. After long resistance on his part, he consented to accept the office, and was elected by the Dean and Chapter, August 1st, 1559. The queen then issued, September 9th, her mandate to six bishops, to confirm the election and con-

secrete the arch-bishop elect. Four of them were Roman Catholics and refused to act; the other two, Barlow, formerly Bishop of Bath, and Scorey, ex-Bishop of Chester (both deprived under Queen Mary), were insufficient to act alone, and the proposed consecration failed.

On the 6th of December, 1559, a second mandate was addressed to Kitchin, Barlow, Scorey, Coverdale ex-Bishop of Exeter, two suffragans, and an Irish Bishop, (Bale) to proceed with the consecration. On the 17th of December, four of them, viz., Barlow, Scorey and Coverdale (all "deprived" under Queen Mary, and not yet restored), and one of the suffragans (John Hodgskins, suffragan of Bedford), performed the consecration. From Parker were derived all the subsequent consecrations of bishops in the Church of England, and so of America. The validity of this transaction is, therefore, in the Episcopal view of the matter, a question of supreme importance. That Parker *was*, by a valid and canonical consecration, made arch-bishop, may be easily admitted as probable; but in a case on which such momentous consequences are made to hang, not *probability*, but positive demonstration is justly required, and demonstration, as appears from the following particulars, is signally wanting:

1. The four consecrators were extremely doubtful of their right to act, and only did so after having obtained an opinion from several lawyers that they were competent. This would seem insufficient warrant for the performance of an act which is essential, as is held, to the perfection of the apostolic succession.

2. Almost from the time of the consecration of Parker, its validity was publicly denied, and the evidence to warrant it called for in vain. It was denied that any

such consecration ever took place; and, if it did, it was affirmed that, for several reasons, the act was fatally defective.

3. This was so generally the impression that, eight years after, viz., in 1566, the parliament thought it necessary to declare the act to have been valid, all errors and informalities to the contrary, notwithstanding. But if the act was *ecclesiastically* invalid, no retrospective act of parliament could remedy the fatal defect.

4. The evidence alleged for the consecration of Parker, on the 17th of December, 1559, was Parker's own "*register*." This was never produced till 1613, more than fifty years later. It was then hastily shown to certain Romish priests, to silence their objections; when they desired the opportunity for a second and more deliberate examination, it was refused.

5. The record of Parker's consecration contained in this register differed so strangely from the ordinary form of such documents, as to throw great suspicion upon it. Both Romish and Presbyterian writers charged that it was a palpable forgery.

6. Admitting, however, that a form of consecration for Arch-bishop Parker was actually gone through with, on the 17th of December, 1559, there is great reason to doubt whether it supplied the necessary conditions for the transmission of an "apostolic succession," in the Episcopal sense. The only *consecrator* was Barlow, ex-Bishop of Bath and Wells, who had been "deprived" under Queen Mary. Scorey, Coverdale and Hodgskins were only "*assistants*." Now there is great room for doubt, whether Barlow himself had ever been consecrated. No record of it could ever be produced, though repeatedly challenged. He was *elected* Bishop of St.

Asaph's, in 1535, but resigned before consecration. He was, in 1548, made Bishop of Bath and Wells; and it would seem very likely that his previous "*consecration*" was taken for granted, and nothing said about it. His own frequently expressed opinion was, that "*consecration*" was wholly unnecessary, so that it would have occasioned *him* no trouble to accept the See of Bath and Wells without any such formality. But, if Barlow had never been consecrated, he was entirely incompetent to impart Episcopal grace to Parker.

This brief and imperfect analysis of the argument in the case shows, that however *probable* the consecration of Parker, on the 17th of December, 1559, may be, the evidence falls entirely short of that *demonstration* we have a right to demand.

B

THE ORDINATION OF TIMOTHY.

The whole case of Timothy's ordination is as follows :

Timothy was set apart to his office, it is admitted, by the joint action of Paul and a presbytery; but, it is claimed, that the whole authority to ordain resided in Paul, and that the elders merely laid on hands to signify their concurrence. In support of this, it has been usual to lay great stress on the distinction between the two prepositions *δία* and *μετα*. 2 Tim. : I, 6; "Stir up the gift of God which is in thee, *by the putting on of my hands*" — *δία της επιθήσεως κτλ.* 1 Tim. : IV, 14; "which was given thee by prophecy, *WITH the laying on of the hands of the presbytery*" — *μετα της επιθησεως κτλ.*; "*δία*," it is said, implying efficient action, while "*μετα*" merely signifies concurrence.

To this we reply :

1. That this distinction is unsupported by grammatical usage — the two prepositions being often used interchangeably. Thus, Acts: xv, 4: “*They related what things God had done with them*” (μετ’ αὐτῶν): compare with Acts: xv, 12; “*what signs and wonders God had wrought among the Gentiles BY them*” (δι’ αὐτῶν); so, also, in the vulgate, “*cum*” and “*per*”; the same transaction being referred to in both cases. This presents a precise parallel to 1 Tim.: iv, 14, and 2 Tim.: i, 6.

2. The ordaining body was a presbytery or body of elders, of whom Paul made one, and all took part in conferring the office. It is claimed that this was Timothy’s consecration as apostle or bishop. In that case, according to Episcopal canons, mere elders had no right to take any part in the transaction, even to express concurrence. At the ordination of a *presbyter* by the bishop, other presbyters do lay on hands for that purpose.

To evade this difficulty, it is claimed, that all this presbytery consisted of *apostles*, since the apostles were also elders. This is a mere assumption, with no shadow of evidence. “*Presbytery*” means a body of presbyters or elders. Where *one* apostle is expressly mentioned, and those acting with him are distinguished as *the presbytery*, the inference is plain, that they were not “*apostles*.” If it were related that a certain military operation was conducted by a “*sergeant and ten soldiers*,” though it is a fact that a sergeant is a soldier, the inference would be clear that the ten others were not sergeants.

If this ground be taken, moreover, and it is the only alternative to acknowledging an ordination by presbyters, then the distinction so much insisted on between *δια* and *μετα* must be given up, since the *gift*, on that supposition,

was conferred no more by the hands of Paul, than by those of the other apostles.

It is sometimes said, this was Timothy's ordination, NOT *by the presbytery* but *to the presbyterate* ("Neglect not the office of the presbyterate, which was given thee by the laying on of hands." 1 Tim. : IV, 14), and for this reading, *Calvin's* authority is quoted. (Inst. : IV, III, 16.)

We reply, that on the ground of this ordination, Timothy is directed to do all those acts which are claimed to belong exclusively to the Episcopal office, viz., to ordain, to govern and to discipline, as appears in the Epistles, *passim*. This evasion, therefore, being obviously fatal to the claims of the Prelacy, is seldom insisted on. In his later and better considered Commentary on the Epistles to Timothy, Calvin rejects this interpretation.

The whole difficulty, then, attending the Episcopal theory of this transaction, may be summed up thus :

1. If it is said this was Timothy's ordination as *presbyter*, he is required, on the ground of it (for no other ordination or consecration is pretended), to perform "Episcopal" acts.

2. That if it was his consecration as bishop, presbyters took part in it, which would be wholly inadmissible. According to church canons and the Episcopal prayer book, three bishops are required to consecrate a bishop. Presbyters can have no hand in the service.

3. That the only escape from these difficulties is the gratuitous supposition that all the "presbytery," who took part with Paul, may also have been apostles; in which case, the favorite distinction between *δια*, as signifying *efficient medium*, and *μετα*, as signifying only concurrence, must be abandoned.

The conclusion is, that Timothy was ordained as a

presbyter or elder, by Paul and a number of presbyters, with a special commission as an evangelist — a traveling assistant to the apostles. He was sent from place to place, as the needs of the churches required. By Paul's direction, he remained some time at Ephesus, which occasioned the fable that he was bishop of that city. But the Epistle to the Ephesians (A. D. 61-63) makes no mention of him or any other person as bishop; and in Paul's address to the Elders of Ephesus (A. D. 58), he commits to them, collectively, *as bishops*, the entire spiritual oversight of the flock. (Acts: xx, 28.)

Prof. Jacobs thinks the "*gift*" conferred on Timothy was a supernatural *χαρισμα*, and that this could be conferred only by an apostle; but there is no allusion in the history of Timothy to his possessing any *χαρισματα*; neither would elders have taken any part in conferring such supernatural endowments upon him. "Gift" here means simply office. (Jacobs, p. 118.) The *χαρισματα*, as has been already seen, were *unofficial* gifts, conferred miscellaneously on the disciples. *This* was a formal designation of Timothy to the work of an evangelist.

C

RISE OF NON-CONFORMITY IN ENGLAND.

The Reformation in England, being conducted by the government, and largely on political considerations, proceeded on the principle of changing existing usages as little as possible. The authority of the pope was renounced, the monasteries suppressed, and Cranmer's Bible published with the royal sanction. The king became head of the Church of England. This was the only change during the reign of Henry VIII. Most

Romish doctrines and ceremonies remained in force, under the penalties of the "Six Bloody Articles."

On the accession of Edward VI. (1547), the Reformation was further advanced by abolishing the mass, removing images from the churches, and requiring the communion to be administered under both kinds. A book of homilies, consisting of twelve discourses on points of Christian faith and morals, was published for the use of the clergy; and the liturgy was compiled from four Romish mass books. In almost everything else, the former rites and usages remained unchanged. An act of parliament, in 1549, required the clergy, under heavy penalties, to conform to the prescribed ritual.

But while the hierarchy, and the governing classes generally, were content with the changes effected, a large body of the lower clergy, and of the people, who had engaged in the reformation as a *religious* movement, were offended that so much was left, savoring of the old superstition. They objected, in particular, to the priestly vestments, to the cross in baptism, to the ring in marriage, the use of sponsors, and kneeling at the Lord's Supper. They desired a shorter liturgy, with some allowance for free prayer. They objected to putting the apocrypha on a par with canonical scripture, and to the obligation of certain fasts and festivals. They denied that bishops were an order superior to presbyters, or had any exclusive authority for ordaining. In most, if not all these respects, further changes were contemplated by the leading English reformers, and would, no doubt, have been effected, but for the premature death of the young king.

On the accession of Queen Mary, in 1553, and the counter-reformation that followed, large numbers of the

English Protestants, including several bishops and many eminent divines, took refuge in Germany, Switzerland, and Holland. A portion of these exiles, who settled in Frankfort, organized a congregation by themselves, being permitted to meet for worship in the French Church. They conducted their service according to King Edward's liturgy, amended and simplified, and leaving a part of the service for free prayer. Of this church, John Knox was one of the pastors, and John Calvin a friend and counselor. Its harmony was soon broken up by the arrival of other exiles, who were zealous for King Edward's unchanged liturgy, especially Dr. Cox, who had been tutor to that prince — the same from whom Elizabeth afterwards wrested Ely Place, with the threat of "unfrocking" him, if he resisted. The intrigues of this churchman led to the division of the society, and the banishment of John Knox from the city. The "Puritans," as they now began to be called, withdrew to Geneva, and there established an English Church, with a Presbyterian polity, and a service of prayer drawn up for them by Calvin.

On the accession of Queen Elizabeth, in 1558, these Puritan exiles returned home, strongly imbued with the leaven of Presbyterian sentiments; and the struggle between the Non-conformists and the hierarchy was transferred to England itself. The queen was not merely opposed to any further reformation, but desired to restore some part of the abolished ceremonies of the Church of Rome. She was opposed to the marriage of the clergy, to preaching and "prophesyings," as the meetings of ministers for mutual improvement were called. She desired to retain images and crucifixes in the churches. The articles were reduced to thirty-nine, by cutting off those relat-

ing to eschatology. The liturgy was reformed backwards, and an "Act of Uniformity" forbade, under heavy penalties, the least deviation from the prescribed service.

The main principle at issue, between the Puritans and the "Court Reformers," concerned the authority of Scripture. The latter held that the Word of God was an infallible rule of faith, but not of practice; that many things relating to discipline and worship are left undetermined in Scripture; that in regard to these, the civil magistrate has the right to decide, and that the practice of the first Christian centuries was the standard to which the church ought to conform.

These principles were maintained with great learning and ability by Richard Hooker, in his *Ecclesiastical Polity*. On the other hand, the Puritans held that the Word of God was a sufficient guide in respect to worship and discipline, as well as faith; that nothing was to be required in divine service, but what was expressly, or by necessary inference, contained in Scripture; and that as regards indifferent things, the right of prescribing was vested in the spiritual officers of the church, and not in the civil magistrate.

In accordance with this principle, they rejected the government of bishops, and all uncommanded rites and ceremonies in worship, and desired to reduce the church to a Presbyterial simplicity in ritual and polity. The energetic despotism of Elizabeth, which kept down the Papists with one hand, suppressed the Puritans with the other; and no organized non-conformity dared show itself in her reign. A considerable body of the best ministers in the kingdom (in London, thirty-seven out of one hundred) refused to wear the vestments, and were deprived of their livings. By some of these a presbytery was

organized, in the year 1572, near London, but was unable to maintain any open existence. Another portion of the Non-conformists, headed by Robert Brown, an unworthy leader, who afterwards proved apostate both in faith and life, pushed their opposition to the hierarchy to the extreme of church democracy, and under the name of "Brownists," or "Independents," organized a congregation, which was soon driven by the bishops to take refuge in Holland. But there remained within the English Church, conforming outwardly to the demands of the act of uniformity, a large body of ministers and Christians, Presbyterian in sentiment, waiting for the dawn of the day of religious liberty.

D

THE ORDERS OF WANDSWORTH.

The strong sentiment among a considerable body of the English clergy in favor of Presbytery, forbidden to express itself openly by the rigor of the act of uniformity, took shape in a secret attempt at Presbyterian organization. These ministers desired a simplified service of prayer, greater liberty of preaching and "prophesying," and exemption from various usages characteristic of the old Romish worship. To all such demands the queen was inflexibly opposed. She thought the Reformation had already proceeded too far, and dreaded the growth of Puritanism, as an element of disturbance in the kingdom. Any variation from the requirements of the act of uniformity, even the slightest, was punished with fine and imprisonment. For neglecting the sign of the cross in baptism, or the ring in the marriage service, devout and laborious pastors were torn from their fami-

lies and flocks, and left to pine for years in filthy dungeons.

The center of the Presbyterian sentiment was London and the vicinity. On the 20th of November, 1572, a number of the ministers met secretly in the village of Wandsworth, in the suburbs, and organized themselves into a presbytery. They agreed upon a confession of faith, and rules of government and discipline, and elected a body of ruling elders. The clerical members were the following :

1. Rev. John Field, lecturer at Wandsworth. He was fellow of Lincoln College, Oxford, and preacher at St. Giles, London: an eloquent, learned and pious divine. He was committed to a loathsome dungeon in Newgate Prison, 7th of July, 1572, on the charge of non-conformity. He was afterwards suspended from the ministry by the Bishop of London, and ordered to remove to a distant part of the country.

2. Rev. Thomas Wilcox, student of St. John's College, Oxford, and much distinguished as a preacher and divine in London. He was the author of numerous works, practical, controversial and expository. For disapproving the government of bishops, and the service of the book of prayer, he was repeatedly suspended from the ministry, and shut up with the felons in Newgate Prison.

3. Rev. Nicholas Crane, student of Cambridge, and minister of Roehampton, near London, a learned and eminent Non-conformist. He was silenced by Bishop Aylmer, one of the bitterest persecutors of the Puritans, several times thrown into prison, and finally died in Newgate, in 1588.

4. Rev. William Bonham. 5. Rev. Nicholas Standen. They were associated with Mr. Crane in their trial

before the Bishop of London; both suffered repeated imprisonments, and were kept in Newgate by Whitgift, after the Lords of the Council had ordered their release.

6. Rev. Robert Johnson, fellow of the King's College, and domestic chaplain to the Lord Keeper Bacon, father of the Chancellor. In July, 1571, he was suspended for non-conformity, by Arch-bishop Parker. Making some concessions, he was restored. Not long after he was again suspended by the Bishop of London, and thrown into prison, for marrying Leonard Morris and Agnes Miles, without using the ring. He fell dangerously ill in Newgate, as so many others did in those pestilential dungeons. The Lords of the Council, on his petition, ordered his release. But the bishop managed to evade compliance, till, worn out by want and suffering, this martyr, for the rights of conscience, died in the Gate House Prison.

7. Rev. John Gardiner, rector of Malden, in Sussex. He was deprived of his living, and thrown into prison, by Bishop Alymer, for preaching without a surplice. He contracted the jail fever, from the effects of which he languished for years. His pathetic petition to the Bishop of London to take pity upon him, and upon his suffering wife and children, might have touched the heart even of an arch-bishop.

8. Rev. Thomas Barber, minister of Bow Church, London, and the beloved pastor of a very large congregation, to whom he was accustomed to preach four times a week. But, with Arch-bishop Whitgift, the souls of the people were of very little consequence, compared with white surplices. He shut up this faithful preacher for several years, and left the flock to such ignorant, pro-

fane and scandalous priests as were usually intruded into the place of suspended pastors.

9. Rev. Henry Smith, student of Lincoln College, Oxford, and commonly called, for his eloquence, the "silver-tongued Smith." Crowds were attracted to his ministry, near Temple Bar, London. For some slight deviation from the service book, Bishop Alymer put an iron padlock on that silver tongue of his. But the favor of the Lord Treasurer Burleigh, who was one of his parishioners, seems to have screened him from further molestation.

10. Rev. William Charke, fellow of Peter House, Cambridge. For denying the divine right of bishops, he was called before Whitgift, and required to recant. On his refusal, he was expelled from the University. The favor of Cecil, who was Chancellor of the University, shielded him for a time; but the arch-bishop stuck faithfully to his skirts, and a short time after found a chance to shut him up altogether.

11. Rev. Stephen Egerton, student of Oxford, and minister of Blackfriars, London, spoken of by Anglican writers as "eminent for learning and godliness." He zealously promoted the "prophesyings," and commonly acted as moderator. For saying "*you*" in the baptismal service, where he ought to have said "*thou*," he was first suspended from the ministry, and then thrown into the Fleet Prison, where he languished for many years.

12th and last, for this was an apostolic presbytery, Rev. Thomas Edmunds, a man distinguished for his talents and virtues, but who occupied, perhaps, in the college, a little the position of Thomas, the doubter. He was a Puritan, without being a zealot — a moderate Non-conformist. But his moderation could not save him

from the relentless clutches of Queen Elizabeth's "Little Black Husband." Whitgift pounced upon him for some slight irregularity, and threw him into prison. After some time he made his submission, and came out, and died, at length, rector of All Hallows Church, London.

Here was a presbytery to be proud of! A convention of felons! A synod of jail birds! They came by stealth to the place of rendezvous, and trembled to hear the sheriff's knock on the door. They were pallid from loathsome dungeons. They had hardly combed the straw of Newgate out of their hair. The marks of iron were on their wrists. But they were felons whose consciences were prisoners to the Word of God, and who preached the everlasting Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. These jail birds were the sons of English universities. They wrote classic Greek; they held profound debates in the Latin tongue; they were familiar with the fathers and the school divines; they were the friends and correspondents of Calvin, and Beza, and Melancthon: they were the unconscious and unrecognized saviors of English liberty from the fatal grasp of the royal prerogative. It was they and their fellow Presbyterians, who alone saved the Protestantism of the realm from the swelling tide of the Catholic reaction. Tory and Liberal, Mr. Hume, Mr. Buckle, and Mr. Froude, alike make this acknowledgment in their favor. Such were the men who, three hundred years ago, attempted to lay the foundations of Presbyterianism in England. The attempt proved, for the time, wholly abortive. The vigilance of the bishops' officers was such, that, no sooner was the fire of religious liberty kindled, than it was trampled out. By the year 1574 the "prophesyings" were everywhere suppressed, and it was not till the over-

throw of the monarchy, seventy-five years later, that Presbytery became an established fact in England.

E

RISE AND FALL OF PRESBYTERY IN ENGLAND.

Almost all the reformers, both in England and on the continent, from Wiclif and Huss to Luther, Knox, Jewell, Grindal, Coverdale, and all the early Protestant divines, denied the divine right of bishops as an order superior to presbyters. They found but two classes of permanent church officers in the New Testament, viz., bishops or presbyters, and deacons. Wheresoever men aimed at a restoration of Christian doctrine and worship, they also insisted on a return to Scriptural simplicity in the government of the church. In Scotland and on the continent, Presbyterianism established itself at once, and the hierarchy was overthrown. In England, on political grounds, Episcopacy was retained. Until the reign of Charles I., therefore, Presbyterianism existed in England only as a latent conviction; and the struggle between king and parliament was well advanced, (1640) before it appeared in the field of controversy. The Romanizing and despotic measures of Arch-bishop Laud, and the support given to the king's arbitrary proceedings by the Episcopal clergy, had nursed among the more serious part of the nation a profound disgust for that form of government. The successful establishment of Presbytery in Scotland was exerting a silent influence, and Scotch divines were in close correspondence with the friends of popular rights in England.

The struggle of arms was preceded by a war of pamphlets, between the friends of Episcopacy and Pres-

bytery. The most famous of these was the controversy between Bishop Hall and others, on the one side, and five Presbyterian divines, under the name of "Smectymnus," on the other.*

This was followed by the "Root and Branch Petition," signed by fifteen thousand citizens of London, praying the House of Commons to "do away with the government of the church by arch-bishops and bishops, with all its dependences, roots and branches." A letter was, at the same time, addressed to the Scotch General Assembly, stating that "the desire of the most Godly and considerable part among us is, that the Presbyterian government, which hath just and evident foundation both in the Word of God and the religious reason, may be established throughout the entire kingdom." This was designed as a step towards securing the aid of the Scots in the coming struggle.

The civil war was opened by the king's setting up his standard at Nottingham, on the 22d of August, 1642, the Long Parliament being at the time in session. On the 5th of November, 1643, the Episcopal hierarchy and government was abolished by act of parliament, an act having been previously passed for calling "an assembly of learned and Godly divines, for settling the government and liturgy of the Church of England." On the abolition of Episcopacy, there remained no provision for the ordination of ministers of the Gospel. The bishops all adhered to the royal side, and refused to ordain any persons not Episcopal in sentiment. The universities also were closed, and no candidates were forthcoming.

* The five were Stephen Marshall, Edmund Calamy, Thomas Young, Matthew Newcomen, and William Spurstow. This trick of words was not very uncommon at the time.

The Westminster Assembly, therefore, by order of parliament, Oct. 12, 1643, appointed a committee of twenty-three presbyters, to examine and ordain men for the ministry: and all ordained by them, or a quorum of them, (seven) were to be reputed ministers, in full standing, of THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND. It was universally taken for granted that "the Church of England" remained, and that the only change was in the form of government. This was the commencement of Presbyterian ordinations in England.

In the year 1646, parliament directed that all England should be divided into presbyteries, ruling elders everywhere ordained, and Presbyterian and synodical government organized. The scheme was at first set up for three years, and then indefinitely; but, in fact, it never established itself, except in Lancashire and in the City of London, where the Presbyterian interest was as it still continues to be, stronger than in all the rest of England together. The reason why the new polity was not organized throughout the realm was that the Presbyterian clergy were dissatisfied with the Erastian element incorporated by parliament with it. The Commons claimed the right of supervising and controlling the discipline of the church. In each ecclesiastical province there was to be a body of commissioners, whose sanction should be necessary to every act of discipline, and to whom every person excluded from the church should have the right of appeal. This provision was so objectionable to the clergy, that they refused to organize under it. They insisted on the divine right of Presbytery, and that the Lord Jesus Christ is the only head of the church. Failing to secure the repeal of this measure, they ceased their efforts, and the work of build-

ing the Church of England on the new basis came to an end.

In 1643 the "SOLEMN LEAGUE AND COVENANT, for the extirpation of popery and prelacy, and the establishment of religion according to the Word of God and the example of the best reformed churches," was subscribed by the parliaments of England and Scotland, the assembly of divines, and great numbers of the people. The further object of the League and Covenant was declared to be, "the maintenance of the rights and privileges of parliament, and the defense of the king's person, family, and authority." The object of the Presbyterians, in short, both in England and Scotland, was the establishment of Presbytery in the room of Episcopacy, with the maintenance of monarchy, in the persons of the king and his posterity. In the day of their triumph, they used their power after the example of the hierarchy they had superseded. It is not strictly true that "the new Presbyter was but old priest writ large."* It was written in the same heavy Roman hand as the established clergy before them, whether Papal or Anglican, had been accustomed to use. But it was writ quite large enough. In 1646, having the entire control of parliament, the Presbyterians passed "an ordinance for the suppression of blasphemies and heresies." "Any man" (so runs this

* Milton had personal reasons for disliking the Presbyterians, having been summoned before parliament, on the indictment of the Westminster Assembly, to answer for his book on "The Doctrine and Discipline of Divorce." The "*Scotch What D'ye Call*" was, no doubt, Gillespie, who was a member of the Assembly, and whose "rugged name," written in the eleventh sonnet "Galasp," seems to have been peculiarly offensive to Milton. For the "*mere A. S.*," who is associated with Rutherford, another eminent Scotch member of the Assembly, the critics have been driven to hunt out or invent "a polemical writer of the times, named Adam Stewart." But it is much more likely "A. S." was an understood symbol for some Presbyterian, or Presbyterians, in the Assembly, than the initials of an obscure or supposititious writer in Scotland. Milton would hardly have stooped to such game.

terrible statute) "denying the doctrine of the Trinity, or the divinity of Christ, or that the books of the Scripture are the Word of God, or the resurrection of the body, or a future day of judgment, and refusing, on trial, to abjure his heresy, shall suffer the pain of death. Any man declaring" (amid a long list of other errors) "that man, by nature, hath free will to turn to God, that there is a purgatory, that images are lawful, that infant baptism is unlawful; any one denying the obligation of observing the Lord's day, or asserting that the church government by Presbytery is anti-Christian, or unlawful, shall, on a refusal to renounce his errors, be committed to prison."*

To carry out such legislation as this, and thoroughly Presbyterianize the Church of England, it was only necessary that Charles should subscribe the solemn League and Covenant, and put himself into the hands of parliament. On these terms the Presbyterians were ready, at any time, to end the war, and receive back the king. They resisted to the utmost his execution, as well as the abolition of the monarchy and the protectorate of Cromwell.

But the power passed rapidly out of their hands. The parliament was overawed by the army, then under control of Independents and Republicans; and by "Pride's Purge," December 5, 1648, one hundred and forty Presbyterian members were excluded from the House. The remaining members, thenceforward called "the rump," consisted of officers of the army, Independents, and others of radical views. It was by them that the king was brought to trial and the form of government changed.

From this time, the Presbyterians remained in a depressed and imperfectly organized condition, until the

* Green's Short History of the English People, p. 553.

death of Cromwell. The excluded members were then restored by General Monk, February 24th, 1659-60. The parliament, now again become Presbyterian, immediately resumed measures looking to the restoration of monarchy, and the establishment of the Church of England, under the rule of Presbytery. Charles II. had already, on his part, subscribed the solemn League and Covenant. He now returned in triumph to the throne of his ancestors, to reign as a pious and Presbyterian sovereign. The result was the immediate re-establishment of Episcopacy, and the passing of a new "act of uniformity," by which, on the 24th of August, ("Black Bartholomew") two thousand Presbyterian clergy were ejected from their livings. Presbyterianism, which had abused its day of success, fell unpitied, and was mostly rooted out of England. What remained became Congregationalized in 1689, and thence lapsed into heresy and insignificance.

F

THE WESTMINSTER ASSEMBLY.

On the 10th of September, 1642. the Long Parliament, in both Houses, passed an act for the utter abolishing of Episcopacy after the 5th of November, 1643; and on the 12th of June, 1643, it having then become plain that no concessions in favor of civil or religious liberty were to be expected of the king, they adopted "an ordinance for calling an assembly of learned and Godly divines and others, to be consulted with by the parliament, for settling the government and liturgy of the Church of England."

The parliament appointed one hundred and fifty-one

persons as members of the Assembly, of whom ten were peers, twenty members of the House of Commons, and the others distinguished divines of the Church of England, Episcopally ordained, but Presbyterian or Independent in sentiment. The Church of Scotland also sent six commissioners. The Assembly met on the 1st of July, 1643, with seventy-nine members present. Dr. William Twisse was chosen prolocutor, and after his death, Dr. Charles Herle. The quorum was fixed at forty, and the average attendance did not equal one hundred. The place of meeting was, at first, Henry VIIth's chapel, in Westminster Abbey; and, later in the year, when fires became necessary to comfort, in the Jerusalem chamber of the deanery of Westminster. Sessions were held daily, except on Saturday and Sunday, interrupted by frequent sermons and days of fasting and prayer.

Every member, on taking his seat, subscribed the following declaration: "I —— do seriously promise and vow, in the presence of Almighty God, that, in this Assembly, I will maintain nothing, in doctrine, but what I believe to be agreeable to the Word of God, nor, in discipline, but what I conceive most to the glory of God, and the good and peace of His church." This was publicly read every Monday morning.

The Assembly began with a revision of the thirty-nine articles, and proceeded as far as the sixteenth, somewhat changing their form and appending copious Scripture proofs. By the order of parliament, they then laid this aside, and proceeded to the work of drawing up a form of government, discipline and worship, in place of those which had been abolished. In entering upon these subjects, it immediately appeared that there were three parties in the Assembly, viz.:

1. The Presbyterian, which was much the largest, including the greater part of the English divines, all the Scotch, and a number of the lay members.

2. The Independents, containing only about ten members, but distinguished both for their ability and their zeal in urging their views.

3. The Erastian, still smaller in numbers, but embracing several men eminent for learning and backed up by a majority in parliament. They held that the Supreme Magistrate was the head of the church, and that all discipline by the clergy was subject to His review and control. Both these latter parties denied, of course, the divine right of presbytery, while the first maintained it.

The Assembly first drew up the directory for worship, the same, in substance, as that now in use, but considerably more full. This was agreed upon without dissent. It did not include chapter ten — “on the mode of inflicting church censures,” which would have been obnoxious to the Erastians. It was introduced by a preface drawn up by some of the Independent divines, recommending it instead of the service of the prayer book. This was sanctioned by parliament, and divine worship ordered to be conducted by it in all the churches of the kingdom. All copies of the book of common prayer were called in, and the use of it, either in public or family worship, made punishable by fine and imprisonment.

The Assembly then occupied itself with preparing the form of government and rules of discipline. This led to long and heated discussions between the Presbyterians and the Independents. The latter agreed to a ruling eldership, and the calling of synods for advice, but

resisted the idea of the unity of the church, the establishment of church courts, and appellate jurisdiction.

The Erastians, also, zealously denied the right of church courts to subject offenders to trial and discipline, as setting up an *imperium in imperio*, of which they had an exaggerated and mistaken terror. They held that church and state are identical, as they were under the Jewish theocracy; that all persons have a right to the sacraments; and that if excommunication is to be inflicted on any, it can only be by the civil magistrate. This view prevailed in parliament, and led to the Erastian feature in the form of government, which discouraged the Presbyterians from organizing their polity throughout the kingdom.

At the same time with these discussions, committees of the Assembly were at work upon the confession of faith, which was reported to parliament, with the Scripture proofs, the 29th of April, 1647. On the 5th of November, 1647, the shorter catechism was presented to the House of Commons; and on the 14th of April, 1648, the larger.* The authorship of these admirable manuals is unknown, except by conjecture. They are attributed chiefly to Dr. Arrowsmith, head of St. John's College, Cambridge, and Dr. Tuckney, Vice-Chancellor of the University. The logically concise and demonstrative character of the answers to the shorter catechism is traced to the hand of Rev. John Wallis, afterwards so distinguished as professor of geometry, at Oxford.

The Assembly broke up February 22d, 1649, three weeks after the execution of Charles I, having lasted

* Any difference in the dates assigned to these events, is due to the fact of the symbols having been reported to parliament, first in part, and then in their completed form.

five years and six months, and held 1,163 sessions. But a considerable committee continued to sit one day in each week, for the trial and ordination of ministers, till March 25th, 1652, when it silently disappeared.

The Westminster Assembly, though sharing with the early councils, and with the Synod of Dort, in the disadvantage of being embarrassed by its intimate relations with the civil power which called it into being, was yet never surpassed in freedom and boldness of discussion, in the learning and piety of its members, in profound study of the Scriptures, and in the logical and massive character of its doctrinal results.

G

INDEPENDENCY.

It is alleged, in behalf of independency, that the power of church government is most safely trusted in the hands of the brotherhood of each church alone. We affirm, on the other hand, that church power, or any other power, is most unsafely trusted to the hands of a body whose decisions are subject to no review, or control, by any higher body. The smaller the circle from within which the members of a court are to be chosen, the greater the liability to incompetency, to prejudices, to the controlling influence of one or a few individuals. The male membership of a church often consists of a very small number. They may be ignorant, narrow-minded, and prejudiced. The pastor may be arbitrary and passionate. He may be able always to control a majority, and become the petty despot of the church. The decisions of the church may be simply the echo of his sentiments; but they must stand as absolute law, subject to no reversal. What citizen would consent to intrust his life,

or his property, beyond the most trifling amount, to any such irresponsible court ?

Or, if the membership is large, the liability to error and wrong is none the less. Popular assemblages are eminently liable to be moved by passion, or personal influence; and the number taking part in any decision diminishes each individual's sense of responsibility. Mr. Burke, in his *Reflections on the French Revolution*, quotes Aristotle to the effect that "a democracy has many striking points of resemblance to a tyranny;" and in another passage he illustrates it as follows: "The members of a democracy are, in a great measure, their own instruments. They are nearer to their objects. Besides, they are less under responsibility to one of the greatest controlling powers on earth — the sense of fame and estimation. The share of infamy that is likely to fall to each individual, in public acts, is small, the operation of opinion being in the inverse ratio to the number of those who abuse power. Their own approbation of their own acts has to them the appearance of a public judgment in their favor. A perfect democracy is, therefore, the most shameless thing in the world; and, as it is the most shameless, it is also the most fearless. No man apprehends in his own person, he can be made subject to punishment."

A church session, on the other hand, proceeds with comparative caution, for two reasons: In the first place, their number is small, and a greater sense of responsibility for his acts attaches to each individual. In the next place, they know their proceedings are to be reviewed, and are liable to be reversed by a higher body, and reversed with a degree of emphasis which may have

the force of an impressive censure, proportioned to the rashness or passion they may have displayed.

It may be fearlessly asserted that no system can be devised more perfectly adapted to maintain truth, defend character, and enforce discipline, than one in which a case is first tried by a jury, on the spot where it originated, and where every fact bearing on the question is most certain to be brought out; which next goes, or may go, by appeal, to a higher court, drawn from a wider range, and embracing more elements of impartiality and wisdom; and then, by another remove, to a much larger court still, embracing a range entirely without the limit of local prejudices and passions: which, even then, is not necessarily arrested, but may, by possibility, go to an ultimate court of appeals, representing the entire church with which the local church where the difficulty originated is in communion.

As a matter of fact, however, in the Presbyterian Church, only a very few cases, involving important principles, ever reach this highest court. Few appeals go to a presbytery, fewer still to a synod. The two causes mentioned above give a prudence and caution to the acts of a church session, which usually lead all parties to acquiesce in their decision.

The late venerable Dr. Josiah Hopkins, a man of eminently calm and dispassionate mind, after having illustrated, by several examples, the working of the Congregational polity in New England, gives the result of his own experience as follows:

“But I have one more case to relate, and, without giving it, I cannot present the result of my experience for the half century past. As I have already stated, the first twenty years of my official life were spent in New

England, as a pastor of a Congregational Church, and the next sixteen in Western New York, in connection with a Presbyterian. The Congregational Church numbered, generally, from one hundred to one hundred and seventy-five members, and the Presbyterian from four to five hundred. Both were churches that, in point of discipline, stood as high as any in the vicinity. While I was in the Congregational Church, and attended to discipline in the whole church, in several cases the excitement became so high, that the house, though a large one for the country, on a week day was literally filled, for several days. In most, if not in every case, the subject that produced this excitement was, at first, the merest trifle, and it was finally settled by committees and referees. In some cases a spirit of permanent dissatisfaction, even between such as were relatives, and had previously been on the best terms, was left fastened on many minds. In the other church, though it contained more than three times the number of members, there never was a case in which the excitement became such that a common room would not accommodate all that desired to attend the trial.

“While I was in the Congregational Church, appeals were frequently made from the decisions of the church, sometimes to consociation, and sometimes to arbitrators. But in the Presbyterian, though we had meetings, as a general rule, at least once in every week, to attend to cases of discipline, yet there was not, in sixteen years, one single case of appeal. There was not a single case in which the parties were so far dissatisfied with the decision of the session, that they were anxious for another trial.

“Now, I am unable to see how evidence on the subject

before us can be more convincing, than from the comparison of these churches. They were both churches that had the reputation of being comparatively well governed, as much so as any in the vicinity. They were both prosperous. I cannot tell which was most so, as I cannot have access to the records of the Congregational Church. I recollect that it had a steady growth, and from a small and divided state it became one of the most numerous and most influential in that town, and almost the only one, at the time I was called to leave it. The Presbyterian Church, during the sixteen years while I was pastor, received, on an average, sixty a year, amounting to the surprising number of nine hundred and sixty. It cannot for a moment be supposed that the smaller church, situated as it was in one of the better districts of New England, was composed of worse materials, such as are more difficult to keep within proper limits; and yet, within that smaller church, situated in New England, there were excitements almost every year, that very extensively affected the public mind. There were numerous appeals to councils and arbitrators; and what was still worse, there were left between some families some very unpleasant feelings and prejudices, which, it is feared, can never be removed. But in the larger church, containing more than three times the number of members, not one single appeal was ever made from the decisions of the session. Some very trying cases occurred; one member of the session even, being tried and excommunicated, but not one excitement that ever affected the public mind; nor was the peace and happiness of any one family ever destroyed." (Presbyterianism and Congregationalism Compared, by Rev. Josiah Hopkins, D. D., Auburn, 1860.)

H

PRESBYTERIANISM IN IRELAND.

Presbyterianism gained almost no footing in Ireland, until near the end of the 16th century. To prevent its introduction from Scotland, a law was passed, in the third year of Philip and Mary, (1566) forbidding the Scotch to colonize in Ireland, or to intermarry with the Irish people. This law remained in force throughout the reign of Queen Elizabeth, and was only repealed in the year 1607. The Scotch Presbyterians then began to settle in the north of Ireland, in considerable numbers. The "Presbyterian" clergy of London undertook earnestly the work of missions among the native Catholics in that part of the island. They sent over organized bodies of colonists for that purpose, by whom Londonderry, Enniskillen, and some other Protestant strongholds, were either built, or enlarged and fortified. Episcopacy had, indeed, been established as the Church of England, but the number of churchmen were small. The primate of Ireland was Dr. James Usher, distinguished for his learning and piety, and the highly liberal character of his sentiments on church government. The Scotch ministers, who came into Ireland with their people, were zealous against Episcopacy, and unwilling to consent to Episcopal ordination. Through the wisdom and moderation of Arch-bishop Usher, and other Irish bishops, a plan of comprehension was adopted, by which the Presbyterian clergy became incorporated into the Establishment. Ordination was performed by the bishop and the presbytery acting together. Under this plan, many Presbyterians, retaining both their own sentiments and usages, held livings in the Church of Ire-

land, and sat in convocation with the Episcopal clergy. A confession of faith, drawn by Dr. Usher, was adopted, embodying the sentiments of the English Puritans, (the nine Lambeth Articles of 1595) both in respect to doctrine and the church; expressly recognizing the ministry of every Christian Church, and making no mention, even, of bishops, or an apostolical succession. By this liberal arrangement harmony was maintained between the Episcopal and Presbyterian clergy of the Church of Ireland, until Arch-bishop Laud, in 1642, succeeded in getting Usher's articles set aside, and a rigid subscription to the thirty-nine articles substituted in their place. This broke up the unity of the Irish Church, and weakened the cause of Protestantism, which had already suffered greatly from the Irish massacre of the year 1641. During the commonwealth, Episcopacy was abolished in Ireland, as in England. Cromwell reduced the Irish people to submission, inflicting severe punishment for the massacre of the Protestants. On the restoration of Charles II, in 1661, Episcopacy was restored in Ireland. All who had been ordained during the period of the commonwealth were required to be re-ordained, but without condemning their previous ordinations as invalid. Through this saving clause, the Presbyterian clergy continued to hold places in the Irish Church. On the revolution of 1688, the Presbyterians of Ireland, as a body, received express toleration, and an allowance from the state, the "regium donum," was made to their ministry. From the period of this corrupt relation, began the decay of Irish Presbyterianism, both in doctrine and life. Early in the 18th century, Arianism began to prevail among the Presbyterian, as it did among the Anglican clergy, both of England and Ireland. In 1726 the Irish

Church was divided. The Belfast and Dublin ministers insisted on a loose subscription to the confession of faith, which would admit both Arminians and Arians. They were thereupon excluded from the synod, and the line was drawn between the unsound and the orthodox portions of the Irish Presbyterian body. This was followed by the "adopting act" of the Presbyterian Church, in America, in 1729.*

J

HISTORY OF PRESBYTERIANISM IN AMERICA.

The early New England colonists, through dread of ecclesiastical tyranny, from which they had suffered so much at home, were inclined to keep at the farthest remove from prelacy. They were, by no means, disinclined, however, to the essential features of Presbyteri-

* The low character of the Episcopal clergy of the time, both as respects faith and life, is too well known. A few years after this, Dr. Rundle, who was suspected of holding Arian views, being nominated Bishop of Derry, and objection being made, on that ground, to his consecration, Dean Swift vented his scorn of the scruple as follows :

Rundle, a bishop! Fie, for shame!
 An Arian to usurp the name!
 A bishop in the Isle of Saints!
 How will his brethren make complaints?
 Dare any of the mitred host
 Confer on him the Holy Ghost,
 In mother church to breed a variance,
 By coupling orthodoxy with Arians?

Yet, were he heathen, Turk, or Jew,
 What is there in it strange or new?
 For let us hear the weak pretence
 His brethren find to take offense;
 Of whom there are but four, at most,
 Who know there is a Holy Ghost;
 The rest who boast they have conferred it,
 Like Paul's Ephesians, never heard it,
 And when they gave it, well 'tis known,
 They gave what never was their own.

&c., &c , &c.

anism, as appears from the Cambridge and Saybrook platforms, which recognize the visible unity of the church, a ruling eldership, and synodical government.

The first express Presbyterian Church in America was organized at Rehoboth, in Maryland, in 1682, by Rev. Francis Mc Kemie, a member of Lagan Presbytery, in the north of Ireland. The Presbytery of Philadelphia was organized in 1705, with a body of ministers of whom one-half had been Scotch-Irish Presbyterians, and the rest New England Congregationalists. In 1716 the Synod of Philadelphia was constituted from four presbyteries. The laxity and unsoundness in the Irish-Presbyterian Church rendered it necessary to lay an explicit doctrinal basis for the union of the church in America. In 1729, by what is known as the "adopting act," the Westminster Assembly's standards (excepting the "Erasian clauses," in chapters 21, 23 and 31.) were formally acknowledged as the standards of the church. Among the Scotch-Irish members, however, in the synod, jealousies soon grew up, occasioned by the varying interpretations of that act, and the arrival of new ministers from Ireland, whose orthodoxy was doubtful. These jealousies were increased by the breaking out of the "great revival," and the frequently rash and injudicious measures used to promote it; particularly, by William Tennent, a Scotch-Irish minister, and his four sons. Great alarm was also felt at the influence of "Log College," a school established by Tennent, at Neshaminy, in Pennsylvania, for the education of young men for the ministry. To these causes is to be added the influence of Whitfield, at that time prosecuting a preaching tour in America. The conservative party, or "old side," disapproved of the rash and disorderly measures connected

with the revival; desired a sound and well educated, as well as zealous ministry, and required a strict subscription to the standards. The new side, or "the New Brunswick party," was composed of the Presbytery of New Brunswick, which included three of the Tennents, and such others as sympathized with them. In 1741 (the synod then sitting at Philadelphia) a protest was introduced, recounting the divisive and disorderly practices of the "New Brunswick brethren," and requiring their exclusion from the church. The latter, proving to be in the minority, withdrew from the synod. This made the schism of 1741.

The New England members generally adhered to the majority. The New York Presbytery, which was not present at the above mentioned acts, and was strongly in sympathy with the revival, and, in so far, at least, with the New Brunswick brethren, made early and repeated efforts to heal the schism. This failing, they organized the new Synod of New York, of which the New Brunswick Presbytery became a part. Thus, the Synod of New York, with three presbyteries, composed the "new side," and the Synod of Philadelphia, with the same number, the "old side." The new synod comprised the most earnest and progressive elements in the church. It grew rapidly in numbers and influence. Its membership soon became three times that of the "old side." Its ministers were in high repute and demand. The relation between the two synods, however, was not acrimonious. The feeling of irritation soon abated. New overtures were made for peace, and in 1758, after lasting seventeen years, the schism was healed, on principles satisfactory to both sides. The Synod of Philadelphia, at the reunion, counted but twenty-two ministers, while

the Synod of New York had increased to seventy. Between 1758 and 1775 the Presbyterian Church continued to grow steadily, notwithstanding the decided and persecuting opposition of the colonial established church. In 1789 the organization was completed, by the meeting of the FIRST GENERAL ASSEMBLY, which convened at the same time and place, viz., Philadelphia, May, 1789, as the FIRST CONGRESS under the constitution of the United States.

K

EPISCOPACY IN THE AMERICAN COLONIES.

At the beginning of the 18th century, when the feeble elements of Presbyterianism, in this country, were just beginning to crystallize in their primary forms, the Episcopacy of the English Church had long had exclusive possession of the middle and southern colonies. Exactly one hundred years before the formation of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, King James, by orders under the privy seal, established the English Church in the plantations in America. Episcopacy was the state religion in most of the colonies outside New England, as truly as it was in the mother country, though not yet so completely organized. Its churches and parsonages were built with public money, its clergy supported by general tax, and inducted into their parishes by royal authority. Christians of every other denomination were "dissenters," rigorously excluded, so far as possible, or persecuted by severe penal laws, and, at length, only tolerated by the act of the Revolution government, of 1688. But the growth of Episcopacy in the colonies was slow. When Francis McKemie, John Hampton, John McNish, and their four associates, stood around

the cradle of infant Presbytery, in Philadelphia, in 1705, the established clergy of all sorts in the colonies, parsons, teachers, and regimental chaplains, amounted to less than fifty. Seventy years later, at the breaking out of the Revolution, they had grown to less than one hundred.

The causes of this tardy increase, notwithstanding the fostering care of government, and the efforts of the "venerable society for the propagation of the Gospel in the colonies," were found in the degraded character of the clergy themselves, the lack of popular sympathy, and the want of an American Episcopate. The Anglican congregations in America occupied an equivocal position, belonging to no diocese whatever. By an unauthorized arrangement, tacitly acquiesced in, the bishop of London had come to be regarded as the diocesan of the church in the colonies. Resort was had to him for all needed Episcopal acts. Confirmation and government were wholly wanting, and every native born candidate for orders must pass the seas, to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit at the hands of the "successor of the apostles."

During the century that preceded the Revolution, this was no trifling hardship. In the imperfect navigation of the period, the voyage, even if successful, was tedious. But it was often attended with fatal results. The unhappy candidates were wrecked on the coast; they foundered on the high seas, and were never heard of; they were cut off by the small-pox in England, where the disease was thought to be peculiarly fatal to Americans; they were taken by French privateers, and "died, prisoners in Bayonne." One-fifth, at least, of all who went out for orders never came back.

Repeated efforts were made, at various times during the eighteenth century, to induce the English government to provide a bishop for the colonies. All these failed, partly through the indifference of the English Church, and partly from the strenuous opposition of American Episcopalians themselves, to the scheme. The clergy and the legislature of Virginia protested almost unanimously against it: and the clergy of Georgia, at a later period, gave a reluctant consent, on condition that no bishop should reside within the limits of that state.

During the Revolutionary war, the Episcopal clergy, with only a very few exceptions, remained loyal to the British crown. Bishop Wilberforce observes, that "amid the general defection, one class of men alone remained faithful. While hypocrisy found in Puritanism the forms it needed, (days of fasting and prayer, &c.) not one minister of the Episcopalian Church, north of Pennsylvania, joined the side of the insurgents." *

Immediately on the establishment of American Independence, efforts were renewed to secure from England that apostolic succession for the states, which the mother church had never been willing to provide for her children in the colonies. Dr. Seabury was elected bishop of Connecticut, and, even before the British troops had evacuated New York, sailed for England in the hope of obtaining consecration. Finding no encouragement in England, Dr. Seabury kept on northwards, and sought Episcopal grace from the non-juring bishops of Scotland.

Four obscure, private individuals, the successors of those bishops who had refused to acknowledge the Revolution government, and had, accordingly, been "de-

* History of the Prot. Episcopal Church in America, by Samuel, Lord Bishop of Oxford, Am. Edition, p. 132.

prived," perpetuated their empty titles among the northern Jacobites. It was a hundred years since the Stuarts had forfeited the English throne; but the non-juring bishops still looked to the exiled pretender of that family, a discreditable hanger-on about the Papal court, as the Lord's anointed, and the rightful head of the English Church. From him a *couge d'elire* was sought, as often as it was thought proper to go through with the farce of transmitting their apostolic authority. Three of these bishops, destitute of any legal or moral right to act, laid their hands on Dr. Seabury, and Dr. Seabury assuming the act, however irregular, to be at least canonical, claimed to have been the first to transport the "apostolical succession" to America.

So much suspicion, however, attached to this proceeding, that eminent Episcopalians thought it necessary to procure a more reliable consecration. The Congress of the United States, rather singularly, interested itself in the matter. Four persons were duly elected bishops of New York, Pennsylvania, Maryland and Virginia, of whom the three first sailed to England, and received consecration at the hands of the Arch-bishop of Canterbury; Prevost, of New York, a narrow minded, violent tempered, low Arminian churchman, who subsequently resigned an office for which he had no taste or fitness; Madison, of Virginia, an accomplished gentleman, but far more fond of philosophy, science, and social pleasures, than of the duties of the Episcopate in a dilapidated diocese; and WILLIAM WHITE, of Pennsylvania, whose devout, humble and charitable spirit reflect honor on his office and on the church of which he was a chief pastor.

L

OBJECTIONS TO THE EPISCOPAL LITURGY.

The unscriptural teaching of the Episcopal prayer book, in the baptismal and burial services, constitutes, perhaps, the most serious objection to it. In the service for baptism and confirmation, the hearer is taught to believe that the external rites of the church have a sacramental efficacy of themselves; that they accomplish an *opus operatum* upon the subject, by which, wholly apart from any active and voluntary exercise of religious affections, he becomes a child of God, an heir of Heaven, and the reasonable expectant of a glorious immortality.

It is sometimes said, indeed, that by a child's being "regenerated in baptism" is not to be understood its being born again in a spiritual sense. It is a "conditional regeneration," or an outward change of relations; a change of state and not a change of character; but the prevailing sentiment, and the decision of the highest authorities, is otherwise, viz. : That the regeneration of the child in baptism is his renewal by the power of the Holy Spirit, and that if he persevere in baptismal grace, he needs no other regeneration. And this view appears most conformed to the language of the service. After the baptism has been performed, the rubric directs that the priest shall say, "Seeing now, dearly beloved, that this child is regenerate and grafted into the body of Christ's Church, let us give thanks to Almighty God for these benefits. We yield Thee most hearty thanks, most merciful Father, that it hath pleased Thee to regenerate this child by Thy holy Spirit, and receive him for Thine own child by adoption, and to incorporate him with Thy holy church."

The same thing is declared in the baptismal service for adults. This whole question of the teaching of the prayer book, in regard to baptismal regeneration, received striking illustration in the course of what was known as the "Gorham Controversy," in England. The notorious Bishop of Exeter, Dr. Philpotts, refused to institute Mr. Gorham to a benefice, on the ground of his heresy, in holding that Episcopal baptism is not infallibly the spiritual regeneration of the subject of it. After a long, vexatious, and expensive suit, to which Mr. Gorham was put, in asserting his rights, the case was finally decided in his favor, by the judicial committee of the privy council, on this ground, viz.: Not that the language of the service does not seem to imply baptismal regeneration, in the high church sense, but that such liberty of opinion has always been allowed in the Church of England on the subject, as to show that her intent is to leave this an open question. The judicial committee affirmed that the rubrics and formularies touching the efficacy of baptism admit of being honestly understood in different senses, particularly when the baptismal service is interpreted by the article on baptism. (The 24th.)

This decision produced a violent ferment among the high churchmen, both in England and America. A solemn protest was presented to the government, by the bishop of Exeter's party, in which the decision was stigmatized as "giving public legal sanction to false doctrine, as doing injury and dishonor to Christ and His church, and involving all who should countenance it in the guilt of heresy."

The same violent sentiments were uttered by the high church party in this country, through their leading

organs ; enough to show that, by the leading representatives of that church, the doctrine of spiritual regeneration, infallibly accompanying baptism, is held vital to the Episcopal system, the denial of it a "heresy," requiring open resistance, and even, according to Bishop Philpotts, withholding communion with those implicated in it.

The teaching of the burial service we must also regard as dangerously erroneous. Over the grave of the drunkard, the perjurer, the profane swearer, the priest is required to declare that "it hath pleased Almighty God, in His great mercy, to take unto Himself the soul of our dear brother here, departed." Thanks are given as for a faithful soul departed in the Lord, "that he hath delivered this our brother out of the miseries of this sinful world;" and the prayer is uttered, "that we, also, when we depart this life, may rest in Christ, as our hope is that this our brother doth." In fine, a more nakedly Universalist service it would scarcely be possible to frame.

In the decision of the judicial committee on Mr. Gorham's case, it is attempted to sustain their view of interpreting the language of the prayers in a qualified and charitable sense, by a reference to this language of the burial service. They say, "so far as our knowledge or powers of conception extend, there are, and must be, some persons, not excommunicated, who, having lived lives of sin, die impenitent, nay, some who perish in the actual commission of flagrant crimes; yet, in every case, the priest is directed to say, 'forasmuch as it hath pleased Almighty God,' etc., 'we commit his body to the grave, in the sure and certain hope of the resurrection to eternal life,' etc. In this service, therefore, there are absolute expressions implying positive assertions.

Yet, it is admitted they cannot be literally true in all cases, but must be construed in a charitable sense, justified, we may believe, by a confident hope that the expression is literally true, in many cases, and may be true even in the particular case in which it seems to us improperly applied."

This must be regarded as a miserable apology. A minister of Christ is justified, it appears, in declaring, in absolute terms, and under the most solemn circumstances, that the soul of a grossly irreligious member of the Episcopal Church has been "taken by God, in great mercy, to Himself," because this *is* true of some others, and *may be* true, as the committee think, even in that case. It is quite remarkable that the whole burial service does not contain a word referring to the future condition of the wicked. The whole implication, in every case, is the present salvation, and future glorious resurrection of the departed.

Bishop Sherlock, as quoted in Southey's commonplace book, sets up a defense on this point, as follows: "But, it is said, this encourages his wicked companions, who attend his funeral, to hope they, too, may be saved, though they persist in their wickedness to the last, as he did. Now, indeed, what little matters may encourage such men in sin, I cannot say, but there is no reason that a faint and charitable wish should do this. If they know the Gospel of Christ, they know He has threatened eternal damnation against all impenitent sinners. If they know the doctrine of the church, they know she teaches the very same thing. If they saw their wicked companion die, they saw his dying horrors and agonies, which few of them die without; and when they know and see all this, is there any hope they shall be saved in

their wickedness, only because the church will not damn them, but reserves them to the judgment of God, and sends her charitable judgment after them?"

Now, this is by no means a candid or honest defense. What Bishop Sherlock passes off for a "charitable wish," the committee of the privy council, in Mr. Gorham's case, admit to be "positive assertions," and no one, certainly, can read the burial service and make anything less of it. In the very service appropriated to the consideration of death, and the state of men after death, the liturgy teaches, that (setting aside suicides and excommunicated persons) all who die in the Episcopal Church, "rest from their labors, enter into joy and felicity, and shall have their perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in God's eternal and everlasting glory."

Now, what is it to the point to say, "It is the doctrine of the church that damnation is threatened to all impenitent sinners?" Is not the liturgy a part of the doctrine of the church? It is always appealed to as such, and it is that part of her teachings, which, as being continually in the minds and mouths of her members, must necessarily be the most influential in forming their views of doctrine. As to the "articles," they contain, in their present form, no express assertion of future retributions; the forty-second of King Edward's articles, directed against the heresy which affirms the ultimate salvation of all men, having been dropped in the Elizabethan revision.

But even if there were any such assertion, the articles are seldom read, and comparatively little valued. Their ineradicable Calvinism causes them to be looked upon with a degree of coldness. The liturgy is the great Episcopal exponent of doctrine. Neither is it any more to the point to say that the sinner knows the declarations

of Scripture in regard to the finally impenitent. So does the avowed Universalist; but his church teaches him to put a construction on those passages, which disarms them of their terrors, and permits him to believe, no matter what his character, he is sure of Heaven at last. And as for the dying agonies of wicked men, suggestive, as these must certainly be, of some future horror, "the church" does her best to counteract the impression, by assuring the spectators that these agonies are but the eccentric presage of a glorious immortality.

The explicit teaching of a man's church constantly dinning in his ears is not "a little matter," as Bishop Sherlock disparagingly calls it. Among "churchmen" generally, the church is regarded as the authorized expounder of Scripture. The individual is expressly warned against trusting to his own private judgment. With that willingness, therefore, so natural to man, to escape responsibility, he says, my church teaches that if I only die in her communion, I am safe. She will solemnly declare over my grave that I have died in the Lord, and am blessed from henceforth, and shall have my "perfect consummation and bliss, both in body and soul, in God's eternal and everlasting glory." If I am deceived, it is she has deceived me, and she, not I, must answer it.

The Rev. Mason Gallagher of the Reformed Episcopal Church, having referred to the above cited words of the baptismal service, adds: "In view of these words, how utterly worthless and indefensible was the declaration of fifty American bishops, in 1871, that the word regenerate in the office for baptism does not determine a moral change in the recipient. It was a statement etymologically, historically and doctrinally erroneous. It was another ami-

able, but desperate and unsuccessful attempt to reconcile the Romanism and Protestantism of the book of common prayer ; to harmonize truth and error ; to keep the image of clay and brass upon its feet. Thank God, this unholy alliance has been at last broken, and a prayer book has been at length framed in the Anglo-Saxon tongue, which makes the Word of God supreme, which rejects the traditions of men, and by which those who hold to Romish error and Protestant truth cannot worship in sincerity together." ("Prayer Book Revision a Duty and Necessity," by Rev. Mason Gallagher, p. 42. Reformed Episcopal Church publications.)

M

THE SCHISM AND REUNION OF 1837-70.

Notwithstanding the cordial reunion of the old and new sides, and the unification of the entire Presbyterian body, by means of the General Assembly, in 1789, the seeds of difficulty still remained, and, by the close of the first quarter of the present century, developed themselves in strong mutual suspicions and jealousies. The "new side" reappeared under the name of "new school," sympathizing warmly with New England, choosing to conduct missionary and educational enterprises by voluntary societies, enthusiastic for the revival, and carrying it on by means of evangelists and protracted meetings, and moderate in its type of Calvinism. In addition to these, and eventually swallowing up everything else, was the difference between the Northern and the Southern part of the church on the question of slavery. The old school side, while also earnest for the revival, was opposed to the doubtful machinery often used to promote it, watched jealously against doctrinal errors, and pre-

ferred to carry on the evangelical enterprises of the church by boards created by the General Assembly, and responsible to the church herself. These causes, exasperated by the passions of violent and domineering men on both sides, ripened matters, before the year 1837, for another schism. The "old school" party found themselves a majority in the Assembly of that year. They proceeded to abrogate (as they were entirely competent to do) the PLAN OF UNION between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists as unconstitutional. They proceeded further, and declared it void *ab initio*. Then, assuming (under the influence of an unhappy error as to the facts) that the Synods of Utica, Geneva and Genesee had been formed and attached to the General Assembly by the operation of that plan, the General Assembly declared that they never had made, and did not make, a part of the Presbyterian Church. By means of this revolutionary *coup d'eglise*, the schism of 1837 was consummated. Protracted law suits followed, resulting in decisions, first for the old and then for the new school. For several years, there was a strong sentiment of suspicion on the one side, and of injury on the other, between the two bodies.

But there soon developed itself, on the part of what was at first called "Young Presbytery," a feeling of regret and shame at the separation, and a desire for reunion. The new school side became more zealous for church doctrine and order. Irresponsible evangelists began to be discountenanced. The conviction grew that the close relations maintained with New England Congregationalism had proved detrimental to the proper spirit and development of the church. Voluntary societies lost their hold on the confidence of the presbyteries,

and a preference for church boards increased. The parties who had been most active in effecting the schism died, or outlived their influence. A generation grew up who had taken no part in the unhappy struggle, and felt no interest in perpetuating the schism. Finally, the great convulsion of the civil war occurred, and the institution of slavery, which had proved so fatal an element of discord in church and state, was providentially removed. There seemed, then, no further reason why the two parts of the Presbyterian Church, which were one in faith, order, and sympathies, should be longer separated; so, in the course of three or four years, by wise and fraternal methods, the difficulties in the way of reunion were overcome. The two "branches" met, by delegates, in conventions, in the year 1869, in Pittsburg, dissolved their separate organizations, and blended together as one body. The year following, the first reunited General Assembly met in Philadelphia.

N

PLAN OF UNION OF 1801.

At the opening of the present century, Central and Western New York, then just made accessible to settlers by the construction of roads, and the partial extinguishment of Indian titles, was being rapidly peopled by immigrants from Eastern and Middle States. The population in 1800 was not far from 50,000. The colonists from New England were Congregationalists. Those from New Jersey and Pennsylvania mostly Presbyterians. Faithful and laborious missionaries and pastors came with them, and churches were multiplied. The Congregationalists, from Connecticut, and the Presbyterians, from New Jersey, felt no mutual antipathy or

jealousy. The ministers all united, at first, in associations, of which, in 1804, there were three, viz., Oneida, on the east, Ontario, on the west, and, between them, on the military tract, (bounty lands, granted by the state to Revolutionary soldiers, and embracing the counties of Onondaga, Cayuga, Seneca, Cortland, Tompkins, Oswego, and Yates,) the middle association. The first presbytery west of Albany, the Presbytery of Oneida, was set off by the General Assembly in 1802.

In the year 1801, the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church, acting on an overture from the General Association of Connecticut, adopted a "plan of union for the government of the churches in the new settlements." Its provisions were, substantially, as follows: *First.* The missionaries, both of the General Assembly and of the General Association of Connecticut, were to encourage harmony and co-operation among the members, on both sides. *Second.* A Congregational Church, having a Presbyterian minister, may conduct their own government Congregationally. Any difficulty between the minister and the church, to be referred to his presbytery, if both parties agree to it; if not, to a mutual council of Presbyterians and Congregationalists, in equal numbers. *Third.* A Presbyterian Church, having a Congregational minister, to conduct their own discipline Presbyterially. Any difficulty between the minister and the church, to be referred to his association, if both parties agree to it; if not, to a mutual council of Congregationalists and Presbyterians. *Fourth.* When a congregation consisted part of Presbyterians and part of Congregationalists, they were advised to unite in forming a church, and settling a minister, under these conditions, viz.: To choose a standing

committee of the brethren, to conduct discipline; a disciplined member, if a Presbyterian, to have a right of appeal to presbytery; if a Congregationalist, to the body of the brotherhood; and a delegate from the standing committee, to have the same rights in presbytery as a ruling elder.

This plan was eminently wise and liberal, and operated most favorably for the peace and prosperity of the "churches in the new settlements." Strictly speaking, however, it was, of course, unconstitutional, since it admitted persons to act in Presbyterian courts who were not presbyters, and were wholly unknown to the constitution. The General Assembly, therefore, having some time before requested the General Association of Connecticut, to unite in amicably dissolving this plan of union, of which the Association took no notice, was entirely competent to discard the plan, as was regularly done in the year 1837. The mistake and wrong of the excising assembly was in assuming that the Synods of Utica, Geneva, and Genesee, were made up of Congregational Churches, which had been formed and attached to the Presbyterian Church by the operation of the plan of union; and as that plan was declared unconstitutional and void, *ab initio*, these synods "were not, in form or in fact, an integral part of said church;" whereas, in truth, no Congregational Church, with a single temporary exception, (Genesee) was ever attached to a presbytery by that plan. The Assembly, therefore, in assuming that they had struck away the basis on which those synods were built, and that, in consequence, they fell out of the Presbyterian Church *ex-necessitate rei*, were guilty not only of a wrong, but of a historical blunder. Up to the year 1808, there was not a church con-

nected with any presbytery in Western New York, that was not itself strictly Presbyterian; and no case such as is contemplated in article third, of a Congregational minister being settled over a Presbyterian Church, ever occurred. The minister, in such a case, always became connected with a presbytery, before his installation.



ACCOMMODATION PLAN OF 1808.

How, then, did Congregational Churches come to be connected with presbyteries in Western New York? In this way: By the year 1807, there were two presbyteries in Western New York — that of Oneida, already mentioned, and that of Geneva, organized in 1805, both connected with the Synod of Albany. The ministers composing the Congregational associations, on the same ground, were, also, in many cases, by a somewhat peculiar arrangement, members of Presbytery. The two instances in which this was first permitted, and which established the precedent, were those of Rev. Mr. Higgins, of the Church of Aurelius, and Rev. Mr. Woodruff, pastor of the Church in Scipio, in Cayuga County, both of them admitted to the Presbytery of Geneva, while still retaining their membership in the middle association. This simple, though irregular, proceeding opened the way for the entire dissolution of the Congregational Associations in Western New York, which soon followed. In the year 1807, the middle association sent a memorial to the Synod of Albany, then sitting at Cooperstown, requesting to be incorporated into the synod, reserving, at the same time, to their churches the right of Congregational government. The synod assented to this proposition, agreeing to leave the churches of the

association undisturbed in the administration of Congregational government, and to receive delegates from them on the same footing as ruling elders. This did not, of itself, operate to dissolve the middle association, which, however, was effected in 1810, in the following way: The Synod of Albany, in that year, organized all the churches belonging to the middle association, and the Presbytery of Geneva, into the three presbyteries of Geneva, Cayuga, and Onondaga. The middle association quietly expired, bequeathing its assets to the Presbyterian Church. And thus organized Congregationalism disappeared from the "military tract." The General Assembly of 1808, approved the act of the Synod of Albany, and the principle thus established — that a Congregational Church might be connected with presbytery, on the "accommodation plan," as it was termed, retaining its own internal discipline, and being represented in Presbyterian Church courts by a lay delegate, became fruitful, in the rapid absorption of all the Congregational Churches in Western New York into the Presbyterian body. The Ontario Association was dissolved in 1812; the Union Association, of Oneida, in 1822; and, with this, the last remnant of distinctive Congregationalism disappeared from all the central and western part of the state. Many Congregational Churches were, subsequently, organized, but all connected themselves, at their origin, with some presbytery, on the accommodation plan.

It was not at all, therefore, by the plan of union of 1801, as the General Assembly assumed, but wholly by the "accommodation plan," of 1807, sanctioned by the General Assembly itself, in 1808, that the Congregational Churches within the bounds of the Synods of

Utica, Geneva, and Genesee, came to be incorporated into the Presbyterian Church. The exscinding Assembly, however, apparently acted on Voltaire's principle, that it is more important to strike hard, than to hit in the right place. The plan of 1803 did the mischief, and they punished the innocent plan of 1801.

P

ENGLISH PLAN OF UNION, OF 1690.

The Church in England, formerly called Presbyterian, became, to a great extent, Congregationalized, before its defection to Socinianism. A lax plan of union was entered into between it and the Independent Churches, soon after the revolution of 1688, by which the former parted with the essential conservative features of Presbyterianism. The "heads of agreement" are given in Mather's *Magnalia*, vol. II, p. 223. Whoever compares this plan with the CAMBRIDGE PLATFORM, will see that the latter contains far more elements of Presbyterianism than the former. The plan of union merely allows, without requiring, a ruling eldership, which the Cambridge and Saybrook platforms insist upon; and this mere permission is the only vestige of Presbyterian government incorporated in the English plan. It contains no recognition of any ecclesiastical authority, beyond the local church; no provision for appeals or complaints, and nothing requiring ministers to assent to any form of doctrine at their ordination. The churches were left free to choose as their creed, either the Westminster confession, the Savoy, or the thirty-nine articles. The result of the whole was, that the Presbyterian Churches became Congregational Churches of a very loose type; and from this they slid, imperceptibly, but rapidly, into gross doc-

trinal errors. They merely retained, in part, the Presbyterian name, for the sake of retaining their hold on certain vested funds; acting in this with the same dishonesty as the Massachusetts Churches, which continued to grasp and use, as Unitarians, the funds which had been given them for the support of evangelical doctrine. Only in England, less fortunate than in this country, the law stripped them of their dishonest plunder. It is important to remember, that it was Congregational, and not Presbyterian Churches, in England, that were swept away into Arian errors.

Q

THE DIRECTORY FOR WORSHIP, ON THE FORM OF INVITATION TO THE LORD'S SUPPER.

In answer to an overture, inquiring "whether it accords with the standards, and the spirit of the church, to admit persons to the Lord's Supper, who are not members of the visible church," the General Assembly, of 1876, replied, that "it is not in accordance with the spirit of the Presbyterian Church, to invite any persons to the Lord's Supper, who are not members of the visible church.* The language of the book, relied on by some to authorize indiscriminate communion, (Directory, VIII, 4,) is not correctly interpreted by them. Although, in describing the persons there invited to the Lord's table, church membership is not mentioned, it is clearly implied." (Minutes, 1876, p. 79.)

In reviewing this judgment, it is proper to inquire :

* The overture of 1872 confined itself to the inquiry, "Whether it accords with the *spirit and usage* of the Presbyterian Church, to invite persons — believers — not members of any evangelical church, to partake of the Lord's Supper." To that precise question, no reference whatever being made to the teaching of the "standards," the General Assembly replied, no doubt correctly, in the negative. (Minutes, 1872, p. 89.)

1. What is the actual doctrine of the standards on the subject? “The universal church (Form of Government: II. 1.) consists of all those persons, in every nation, together with their children, who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of submission to His laws.” A particular church (chap. II. 4.) is merely a section, or smaller part, of this universal church, organized locally, for the reason that “this immense multitude cannot meet together in one place, to hold communion, or to worship God.” The character of the members of the universal and the particular church is, of course, and by express definition, the same. They are “professing Christians, and their children.” The ground of their union is the same: they are to live by the same rule. But, as no limits are prescribed to the *size* of the particular church, it consists of so many of the members of the universal church as, on account of local convenience, or other reasons, are “voluntarily associated together.” Their voluntary association consists in this — that they are, by their own choice, members of the congregation.

It is the members of the particular church or congregation (for the terms are used interchangeably, Directory, X, 7,) that are regularly to commune together in the Lord's Supper — that is, a small portion of that universal church scattered throughout the world, which consists of “all those who make profession of the holy religion of Christ, and of obedience to His laws.” Every such person having been duly baptized is a member of the church; and, if free from certain disqualifications which remain to be mentioned, “it is his duty and privilege to come to the Lord's table.”

This is the doctrine of the “standards:” “Children born within the pale of the visible church, and dedicated

to God, are under the inspection and government of the church, and are to be taught to read and repeat the catechism, the apostles' creed, and the Lord's prayer. They are to be taught to pray, to abhor sin, to fear God and to obey the Lord Jesus Christ; and when they come to years of discretion, if they are free from scandal, appear sober and steady, and have sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, they ought to be informed it is their duty and privilege to come to the Lord's Supper."

Now, applying these definitions to chapter VIII, "*of the administration of the Lord's Supper*," we are left in no doubt what persons it is that are to be invited to commune, viz. :

1. It is, in general, members of the church or congregation, that is to say, all baptized persons who are otherwise unexceptionable.

2. Of this church or congregation, the profane, ignorant and scandalous, and those that secretly indulge themselves in any known sin, are to be warned not to approach the holy table. (Chap. VIII, 3.)

3. The minister is to invite all the congregation (see chap. VIII, 3; *that all may come, &c.*), under the three following specifications, viz. :

a. Such as being sensible of their lost and helpless condition by sin, depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon and acceptance with God.

b. Such as, being instructed in the Gospel doctrine, have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body.

c. And such as desire to renounce their sins, and are determined to lead a holy and Godly life.

That this is not a mere cumulative description of the same class of persons, that is, truly regenerated persons, but a specification of three different descriptions or

classes, appears from the style itself; the discriminating words "such as" being thrice repeated. The three classes, therefore, are,

First. Truly converted persons; "*such as depend upon the atonement of Christ for pardon, being sensible of their lost and helpless state by sin.*" This is the description of true Christians.

Second. Birth-right members of the church, who, without making any special profession of having experienced the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, are "instructed in the Gospel doctrine and have a competent knowledge to discern the Lord's body. (See chap. IX, 1.) These persons are, in the language of the standards, "young Christians;" and being sober and steady, free from scandal, and having sufficient knowledge to discern the Lord's body, it is their duty and privilege to come to the Lord's Supper.

The *third* class consists of those who may be called *seekers* or *penitents*; such as have lived estranged from the church and her ordinances, but now "desire to renounce their sins, and to lead a holy and a Godly life."

It appears then, from the standards, that as concerns the question of an invitation to the Lord's Supper, the church and congregation are one; all being regarded as suitable communicants who are not profane, ignorant or scandalous. Those who are so, are to be warned not to come, they themselves being the judges of their own fitness for communion. The examination in respect to the knowledge and piety of "young Christians," has respect only to those who are to be regularly admitted to sealing ordinances at their first communion. (Directory, IX, 2, 3.) Every baptized member of a congregation, therefore, is a member of the church, and, if not ignorant or

scandalous, it is his duty and privilege to come to the Lord's Supper. Of course, it is the duty of the minister to invite him.

If we now turn from the standards themselves to the debates in the Westminster Assembly, on the subject of admission to the Lord's Supper, we find the actual views of the framers of our symbols clearly exhibited. The question before their minds, in every discussion of this point, was not, what persons might be *included* as of sufficiently credible piety to qualify them for communion, but only what persons it was necessary to *exclude* for their ignorance and vices. All the members of the congregation (being baptized Christians) were presumptively proper communicants; and a clear case must be made out against any man in order to exclude him. Whether this exclusion necessarily implied excommunication, or only an official warning to such persons not to come to the Lord's table while impenitent, was the great point on which the discussion turned. Leading Presbyterian divines, such as Gillespie, Reynolds, Herle, Marshall and Calamy, maintained the latter, and their view was finally incorporated in the standards. "The minister is to *warn* the profane, the ignorant and the scandalous, &c." The implication is that such persons, being members of the church, might be disposed to attend the communion, as was always the case in England so long as test acts remained in force. The minister is not to excommunicate such persons, but simply to warn them not to approach, until penitent, the holy table. After elaborate discussion on question 173 of the larger catechism, "*May any who profess the faith and desire to come unto the Lord's Supper be kept from it?*" the answer finally adopted was, as it now stands, "such as are found to be ignorant or

scandalous, notwithstanding their profession of the faith and desire to come to the Lord's Supper, may and ought to be kept from the sacrament, until they receive instruction and manifest their reformation." *

The whole question before the Assembly was, simply, whether pastors had the right to keep anybody from the Lord's table, who was disposed to attend. The Erastian members maintained the negative. Their principle was, that the church, as such, had no power of discipline whatever. In that matter she was merely the servant and organ of the state; and, even evangelical members, like Goodwin, Gillespie, and Lightfoot himself, held that none could be debarred from communion, except such as were actually excommunicated; but that every member of the congregation who was neither ignorant or scandalous, might and ought to commune, was universally agreed.

This unanimous agreement infallibly interprets the language of the Confession, though that language itself is so plain, that it might be supposed to need no interpretation. It shows that, in the intendment of the "standards," all baptized members of the congregation are members of the church, and are presumptively entitled to communion; that among these, such as are profane, ignorant, or scandalous, are to be debarred from

* NOTE. — To the same effect is the rubric introductory to the communion service, in the Episcopal book of common prayer. "If, among those who come to be partakers of the holy communion, the minister shall know any to be an open and notorious evil liver, or to have done any wrong to his neighbors by word or deed, so that the congregation be thereby offended, he shall advertise him, that he presume not to come to the Lord's table, until he have openly declared himself to have truly repented and amended his former evil life, that the congregation may thereby be satisfied, and that he hath recompensed the parties to whom he hath done wrong, or at least declare himself to be in full purpose to do so as soon as he conveniently may."

coming, and that all others are expressly to be invited, under the three specifications already stated.

According to the standards, therefore, the invitation to commune at the Lord's table is to be addressed to persons, not as "members of evangelical churches, in good and regular standing," but as coming under one or the other of these descriptions; that is, they are invited, not with reference to their ecclesiastical standing, but with reference to their own sense of their sins, their wants, and their desires for pardoning and strengthening grace. The superior fitness of an invitation in this form would seem to be obvious.

2. But the question as to the "spirit" of the Presbyterian Church on this point, meaning, thereby, its prevailing sentiment and practice, is a different one, and requires a different answer. The abuses connected with indiscriminate communion in the Established Church of England led the more earnest and faithful pastors, like Baxter, to insist on the distinction between worthy and unworthy communicants. It seemed intolerable to them, that grossly ignorant, profane and scandalous persons should make the solemn ordinance of the Lord's Supper a mere convenience for procuring worldly benefits, as a fellowship in a university, or a commission in the army. They began, therefore, to draw the line between the "church" and the "congregation," regarding the ignorant and profane, even though baptized, and, therefore, in the general sense, members of the church, as not, in such a special sense, members as to entitle them to communion. This gradually developed into that distinctively Independent and Presbyterian view, which makes nothing at all of birth-right membership in the church, and, consequently, disparages infant baptism, as effect-

ing no change in even the outward relations of the subject.

That this is the actual view of the Presbyterian Church, it is impossible to deny. Baptized children are not regarded, among us, as, in any sense whatever, church members. When adults, who had been baptized in infancy, present themselves before the session, and are received, on giving credible evidence of piety, they are regarded, and spoken of, as "joining the church," whereas, the standards declare that they are already members of the church, both general and particular. It is only unbaptized persons who are spoken of in the directory, as being "admitted to the church." (IX, 4.) Having thus thrown contempt on infant baptism, it is highly inconsequent to complain that the ordinance falls into disuse in our churches.

There is here, therefore, as not infrequently happens with any constitution of some antiquity, a direct antagonism between the text and the comment, or the requirements of the statute and the actual practice under it. A constitution remains stationary, but society advances. The creed is stereotyped, while men's opinions are set up in movable forms. In actual practice, errata are silently and insensibly corrected, defects supplied, or superfluities dropped out, while the "standards" retain their fixed and solid shape. Inevitably, therefore, there comes, sooner or later, in all churches, and in all constitutional governments, a collision between the statute and the interpretation.

Which is to give away? The constitution requires one thing, the received usage demands another, and the usage, by prescription, comes to be a kind of unwritten constitution, which claims precedence of the other, and

has an independent life and authority of its own. I observe, in my garden, that the canes of the "black-cap" raspberries root themselves at their extremity in the earth, and set up an independent life of their own. They had previously been nourished wholly from the parent root, the sap flowing out to the very tip, and giving an organic unity to the whole. But in the newly rooted plant the sap soon begins to flow the other way. The young cane sets up an opposition life against the old. The result is, that, somewhere, the opposing currents meet. There is a disintegration and rupture, and the schism becomes complete.

So the practice of a church becomes, at length, by being rooted for some time in the soil of opinion, distinct and separate from the life it was originally derived from.

It becomes, then, or may become, a grave question, when the practice of the church contradicts (as in this case) its written constitution, to which of the two allegiance is owed. That the practice, or the "spirit" of a church cannot always claim the right to overrule its fundamental law, will be easily acknowledged. The Jewish Church was, for long periods, sunk in idolatry, even to the utter loss, or neglect, of the Mosaic statutes; and yet, it was the duty of a reforming prince to disregard the established custom, and bring the people back to the law of the "standards." The church, after the middle of the fourth century, subscribed, almost unanimously, a semi-Arian confession; but the faith remained as laid down by the first general council, and to that every Christian owed his allegiance, and not to the prevailing "spirit of the church." If the prevailing interpretation and the spirit of the church contains the abso-

lute law, as against the standards, then the reformers and the Puritans were precluded, and had no warrant in attempting to bring back the church to her original platform.

On the other hand, it may be admitted, in regard to *adiaphora*, that a long established interpretation must often have the force of an unwritten amendment. Jesus partook of the Passover, not according to the mode expressly required in the original statute, with staff in hand and shoes on feet, but in the method which had gradually come to prevail in its stead. The moral law he cleared of all traditionary glosses and interpretations, and enforced it in its original strictness; but a positive statute he allowed to be modified by the "change of times, circumstances, and men's manners." It might be a sacred duty, therefore, to resist the "spirit of the church," when it required heresy in doctrine, or idolatry in worship. and, at the same time, rash and unjustifiable, to assail it, when it merely requires a change in the mode of administering an ordinance. In indifferent things, prescription must often have the force of law; but then, it is always to be remembered that the beginning of corruption in worship, like the beginning of strife, is *as when one letteth out water*. "Nettle roots (observes Lord Bacon) do not sting;" and an enlightened Christian conscience must arbitrate the question, whether we are bound by an extra constitutional custom, or whether we are entitled, or even bound, to fall back on the constitution itself.

R

ON THE DEMISSION OF THE MINISTRY.

The necessity for some provision for the demission of the ministry has become so urgent, that repeated appli-

cations have been made to the General Assembly, to provide a form, under which it might receive the sanction of the church. In the year 1872, the Presbytery of New York overtured the Assembly, requesting answers to the following questions, viz. :

1. "Whether, when a minister, in good standing, is deliberately convinced that he is providentially released from the duties of his office, he may not, with the consent of the presbytery, demit that office?"

2. "And, in case a presbytery is convinced that any one of its ministers, for any reason, not calling for discipline, is permanently disqualified for the work of the ministry, may not that presbytery, with the consent of the synod, cancel the ordination of that minister?"

The committee, to whom this overture was referred, argued, in reply: *First.* "That the sentiment of the Christian Church, generally, has affirmed the indelible character of ordination." This is easily admitted to be true. The Greek, Romish and Episcopal Churches have always maintained that doctrine. *Second.* That while our standards "make no well defined statement upon the subject," it may be inferred, from the perpetual character of the offices of deacon and elder, of neither of which can any man be divested, except by deposition, that the higher office — that of the ministry — cannot be less permanent.

The committee, however, acknowledge that the *second book of discipline* of the Scottish Kirk, "upon which our own form of government is based, makes an apparent exception to this." It directs (chap. VII, 25, 26,) that "*those ministers who are found wholly insufficient to execute their charge, shall be deposed.*" This insufficiency, the committee think, "appears to be of such a

nature as to call for discipline, for the penalty is deposition." But this view is contradicted by the context. In the previous paragraph the book directs that ministers heretical in doctrine, and immoral in life, (under numerous specifications) shall be deposed. It then adds the separate clause above quoted, making the "altogether insufficient" a distinct class from those guilty of any moral offense. In their case the word "deposed" only means *divested of the ministerial office*, with no other stigma than is implied in the fact, that they were found insufficient for it. *Third.* The committee think there can be little need for any such measure, since so extreme a care is exercised in admitting candidates to the ministry, that very few incompetent persons will be found on the roll.

Unfortunately, this is too favorable a judgment. The injudicious encouragement sometimes given to young men to enter the ministry, the rivalry between theological schools, each holding out inducements to students to enter its doors, the too often superficial character of the examination for licensure, and the fact that, to a man once licensed, ordination is almost never refused, these causes will, from time to time, introduce into the ministry some whose duty it was to "glorify God by making besoms," or in some other respectable handicraft. Add to these the causes which make many ordained ministers "altogether insufficient" for their work, such as the loss of voice, the failure of health, the impossibility of finding a pulpit, inadequacy of support, discouragement, lack of all interest in the ministry, yet not such as to call for discipline, and we have an array of causes which have notoriously introduced into the Presbyterian ministry a considerable number of persons,

stamped with the indelible mark of office, to whom, as well as to the church herself, it would be of immense advantage, if a back door could be opened, through which they could quietly step out into secular life. Many persons who are, and for years have been, wholly secularized, are still burdened with the title of "Reverend," their names borne on the roll of presbytery, and regularly reported in the minutes of the General Assembly. One effect of this is, considerably to swell the apparent strength of the ministry, while, in fact, the "altogether insufficient," or secular, character of the parties tends far more to reduce that strength, than would their entire subtraction from the roll. Numbers of them would welcome a provision, by which, without stigma or reproach, they could be divested of the office. At present, however obviously a Presbyterian minister may have mistaken his calling, and however insufficient he may be for the discharge of its duties, there are only two grim figures whose hands can efface the marks of ordination from his person: the one is infamy, the other, death.

In view of the whole case, the committee recommended the following overture, which was ordered to be sent down to the presbyteries, viz.: "Shall the following section be added to chapter twenty-five of the Form of Government, to wit: The office of a minister of the Gospel is perpetual. No one can lay it aside, at his own pleasure, or be deprived of it, but by deposition. Yet, for reasons not calling for discipline, *First*, A minister may, on his own request, and with the permission of the presbytery, cease to be an acting minister; or, *Second*, If a presbytery is convinced that a minister is permanently disqualified for the ministerial work, (except by

age, sickness, or other accidents,) it may, with the consent of synod, after three months notice to such minister, require him to demit the functions of his office, it being understood that he will still be a member of the church, and eligible to the office of ruling elder, or deacon. *Third.* Provided, that if any one, in either of these ways, cease to be an acting minister, he shall not be permitted to sit, as a minister, in any of our church courts; and, if he is not connected as a member with some particular church, he shall still be responsible to his presbytery, and he may, by it, be restored to the exercise of the functions of his office, and to all the rights incident thereto."

This half-way, self-contradictory and indeterminate measure naturally failed to secure the assent of the presbyteries. Had the committee, on the other hand, dismissing the purely superstitious idea of an "indelible character of office," boldly proposed a measure, providing, under suitable safe-guards, for the full demission of the ministry, there is every reason to believe it would have received the sanction of the church.

Under the delay of providing any such measure of relief, individual presbyteries are naturally led to act independently of a general permission, and introduce for themselves the needed reform. In a recent case, (Sept., 1877,) a minister of the Presbyterian Church, of unexceptionable Christian character, whose mind had become unhappily disturbed, in regard to certain doctrines, applied to his presbytery to be released from the clerical office. If they could not otherwise do this, he requested them to bring charges against him, and depose him from the ministry. The presbytery, in view of all the circumstances, after expressing their high sense of

the applicant's Christian character, and their regret that he should feel called upon to take any such step, resolved that his request should be granted, and his name dropped from the roll, and that he should no longer be reputed a minister of the Presbyterian Church. The synod, on review of the presbyterial records, approved them, without exception.

Other presbyteries may have taken, others certainly will take, the same course, which will be eventually accepted by the General Assembly, and by the church, at its instance. This is the safe and natural method of church legislation. The General Assembly should not originate, but merely accept all necessary reforms. No permission could be gained for a limited tenure of the eldership, until a large body of churches had adopted it without permission, as a necessary measure of relief. The early councils did not dictate the faith of the church. They only formulated into creeds the faith which the church had already developed. The General Assembly is a parliament, which, acting under constitutional restrictions and precedents, neither loves nor volunteers change, but always concedes it when the demand becomes sufficiently pressing.*

S

THE METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH.

The Methodist Episcopal discipline includes the essentials of Presbyterianism, viz., the government of the church by presbyters, or elders, in courts of review and control. The bishops are only elders entrusted with the

* For previous action of the Assembly on this subject, see *New Digest*, pp. 65-70.

superintendency of the church, and are responsible to the General Conference.

The Methodist Episcopal organization includes the following particulars :

1. The station, or local church, with its minister in charge, steward, class leaders, exhorters, local preachers, and committees to aid in discipline.

2. The Quarterly Conference, including the ministers and official members of the churches within a circuit, receiving appeals, licensing preachers, etc. This is presided over by the presiding elder of the district.

3. The Annual Conference, composed of the presiding elders, and all the pastors and lay delegates within its bounds, and receiving appeals from the Quarterly Conferences. It elects traveling elders, or pastors, and deacons, and transacts its business by means of a series of twenty-three formal interrogatories as to the number, standing, etc., of the clergy. There are, in the whole Methodist Episcopal Church, between seventy and eighty such conferences. Each Annual Conference is presided over by a bishop.

4. The General Conference, made up of the bishops and a representation from the Annual Conferences of one from forty-five elders and traveling deacons, and two laymen from each conference. It meets once in four years, and corresponds, generally, in its functions to the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. It also elects the bishops. The bishops choose the presiding elders, who are the chief pastors of particular districts. Candidates for deacons' and elders' orders must pass a satisfactory examination, before committees, on a four years course of study, after they are taken on trial in the Conference.

T

THE SCOTTISH KIRK.

The first book of discipline adopted by the first Scottish General Assembly, an Assembly out of whose forty members only six were ministers, contained all the features of our existing Presbyterianism. It set out with the declaration against the claims of tradition, councils, or church authority of any sort: that "the Word of God only is sufficient for our salvation. It shall be read in private houses, therefore, and taught in every kirk within this realm; and all contrary doctrine to the same shall be impugned and suppressed." From this sole and infallible guide, they deduced, as the ordinary officers for each congregation, bishops or ministers, presbyters or elders, and deacons, each class being appointed to its specific work, precisely as now.

They provided carefully for raising up and educating a ministry, beginning with elementary schools, as follows: "Because schools are the seed of the ministry, diligent care shall be taken over them, that they be ordered, in religion and conversation, according to the Word. Every town should have a schoolmaster; and in landwart the minister, or reader, should teach the children that come to them. Men should be compelled, by the kirk and the magistrates, to send their bairns to the schools. Poor men's children should be helped;" EDUCATION COMPULSORY, that is, and schools, where necessary, FREE.

In the suddenness of the religious revolution that had taken place, and the discarding of the old incompetent clergy, there would, of course, be felt an urgent want of religious teachers, in sympathy with the movement.

No exigency of circumstances, however, was to warrant the intrusion of unfit ministers. "Neither for rarity of men (said the statute), for necessity of teaching, nor for any corruption of the time, should unable men be admitted to the ministry. We should consider, first, whether God hath given the gifts to him whom we would choose, for God calleth no man to the ministry whom he arms not with necessary gifts. Better it is to have the room vacant, than to have unqualified persons, to the scandal of the ministry, and the hurt of the kirk. In the rarity of qualified men, we should call unto the Lord, that He, of His goodness, would send forth true laborers to His harvest. The kirk and faithful magistrates should COMPEL such as have the gifts, to take the office of teaching upon them."

Certain accidental and temporary provisions were also adopted by the first Scottish Assembly, which are well deserving of attention, as illustrating the practical wisdom that presided over this great restoration of the primitive church polity.

1. In the paucity of competent preachers of the Gospel, a class of youthful "readers" was provided for, thus restoring, at the reformation of the church, an order found necessary during the period of its first formation. These "lectors" were to read through, in course, as a part of public worship, selected books of the Old and New Testament. After a certain period of service, they might attempt mingling exposition and practical remark with their reading: and thus, if found acceptable, were, just as in the third and fourth centuries, to be advanced to the ministry.

2. The system included a class of LAY DOCTORS, who were set apart for the work of education, from teaching

the catechism up to the chair of a university. "The office of the doctor (says the book of discipline) is to open up the mind of the Spirit of God in the Scriptures simply, without such application as ministers use; to the end that the faithful may be instructed, and sound doctrine taught. Under the name and office of "doctor," we comprehend, also, the order of schools, colleges, and universities, which hath been, from time to time, carefully maintained as well among the Jews and Christians, as among the profane nations."

The understanding of the Scottish Presbyterians, in other words, was that ministers of the Gospel were to devote themselves expressly to the cure of souls, and that the work of Christian education, in all its branches, was to be attended to by a class of lay elders, set apart for the purpose.

3. Another feature of the first book of discipline was what is called "the exercise," and what was subsequently known among the English Puritans as "the prophesying." It was a meeting composed of the ministers, elders, doctors, readers, and men of learning, of each town, and a circuit of some six miles around. They were required to assemble weekly, "for the explanation of texts of Scripture, discussion of points of doctrine or practice, and whatever else might tend to the edifying of the kirk." At these exercises entire freedom of question and remark was indulged to all persons, with this judicious proviso, "that no man should move a question the which himself is not able to solve."

4. The system of "SUPERINTENDENTS," incorporated in the first book of discipline, was an eminent instance of the wisdom of the Scottish Presbyterians. Resolutely opposed as they were to Prelatical rule, they adopted, in

view of their peculiar circumstances, a modified system of Episcopacy. The new polity was still too crude, and the reformed ministers too ill trained, to be left to their own unaided working. All the country parishes in the kingdom were, accordingly, distributed into five dioceses, over each of which was appointed a superintendent. He was only a presbyter of the same grade as his brethren, and he was to have his own church to serve, like them ; but, in addition to this, he was to go the rounds of his diocese, preaching, at least, three times a week, and inspecting the condition of the several flocks diligently, as follows :

“ In this visitation superintendents shall not only preach, but also examine the doctrine, life, diligence and behavior of the ministers, readers, elders, and deacons. They shall consider the order of the kirk, the manners of the people, how the poor are provided, how the youth are instructed, how the discipline and policy of the kirk are kept, how heinous and horrible crimes are corrected, and shall admonish and dress out all things, the best they may.” For this purpose they were to remain in each congregation from two weeks to twenty days.

It was further carefully provided, that superintendents should be subject to the same responsibility and discipline as other ministers. To guard against any suspicion of a Prelacy, the old title of “ bishop ” was refused them, and no one of the old bishops was permitted to fill the superintendency, until, by subscribing the book of discipline, he had expressly renounced his Episcopal pretensions. In short, it was almost identical with the presiding eldership of our Methodist brethren, an admirable arrangement for a pioneer church, or a church in a new and reforming condition. The virus of Prelacy

does not consist at all in the mere fact of the oversight by one minister of a certain number of other ministers and their congregations. It consists in the assumption that this oversight is exercised by a special divine warrant; that the bishop owes no responsibility to the people, and that he constitutes the indispensable channel on which they depend for all communication of divine grace. This makes a true hierarchy — a system which, however modified and limited by circumstances, embraces the essential elements of ecclesiastical despotism.

U

CHURCH PARLIAMENTARY LAW.

The method of procedure in Presbyterian Church courts is generally conformed to that of ordinary deliberative assemblies, and presents no difficulty that is not overcome by a short experience. But as the General Assembly has directed that attention should be given to this subject in the course of instruction in our Theological Seminaries, the following brief commentary on “the general rules for judicatories” is added. These rules are given in the appendix to the form of government. A foot note observes, that “having never been submitted to the presbyteries, they make no part of the constitution of the Presbyterian Church, but were only recommended by the Assembly of 1821, for the use of our church courts.” This is still their only authority, except as they belong to the body of parliamentary common law. They are usually adopted afresh by each General Assembly for its own government.

So far as appears from the minutes, neither the original Synod of Philadelphia, nor the united Synod of

New York and Philadelphia, after 1758, had any written rules of procedure. On the 29th of May, 1788, the synod "having revised and corrected the confession of faith and catechisms, the form of government and discipline, and the directory for worship, adopted and ratified them as the constitution of the Presbyterian Church in the United States of America." But nothing is said of any rules for judicatories. They had previously acted under the generally received though variable and unsettled rules of parliamentary procedure.

On the meeting of the first General Assembly, the year following (1789), the first act, after voting an address of congratulation to General Washington, was the appointment of a committee to draw up rules for the government of the General Assembly in its proceedings. The committee reported a series of fifteen rules which were adopted, and which, so far as they go, are nearly the same as the corresponding rules now given in the appendix. They were probably drawn from the rules of procedure of the Legislatures of New York and Pennsylvania, as those were from the rules of the British Parliament. This code was improved, by the Assembly of 1821, into the present body of rules, forty-three in number, which, since that time, with the exception of one or two rules to be hereafter mentioned, have remained unchanged.

The government of the Presbyterian Church is vested in the Church Sessions, Presbyteries, Synods and General Assembly, each of which has the right of review and control over the proceedings of the next lower judicatory. The rules apply to the conduct of all these, except the church sessions, to which they have little application.

SEC. I. OF THE QUORUM. — On the meeting of any

legislature or deliberative assembly, the first question that may fall to be considered is that of a quorum. The term is derived from the former usage of reciting the names of the members of a court with the prefix, "*quorum sederunt qui infra*," indicating that the records were, or had formerly been, kept in Latin.

The quorums of Presbyterian Church courts are the following: Of a session, the pastor and two elders, if there be as many; but one is sufficient. (See new Digest, p. 56.) Of a presbytery, three ministers. The rule adds, "*and as many elders as may be present*," but does not stipulate for the presence of any. The quorum of a synod is "seven ministers, and as many elders as may be present, provided that out of the seven, not more than three belong to one presbytery;" that is, in order to constitute a synod, three presbyteries at least must be represented. The quorum of the General Assembly is "fourteen commissioners, of whom one-half at least must be ministers."

No court can transact business without the presence of a quorum; but, by rule third, any two members are competent to adjourn from time to time, until a quorum shall assemble. This rule was occasioned by the circumstance that the Synod of Philadelphia being adjourned, to meet at York, Pa., the 28th of October, 1795, there assembled on that day seventeen ministers, of whom thirteen belonged to one presbytery, and the remaining four to two others. Under the impression that they did not constitute a quorum, the members thought they were incompetent either to adjourn from day to day or finally; and at length simply dispersed and went home.* The quorums of Presbyterian Church courts were fixed in

* See note at end.

the early history of the church, and are now disproportionately small.

SEC. II. MEMBERS OF PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH COURTS. — The Form of Government, chap. XI, 1, says: “As a presbytery is a convention of the BISHOPS and ELDERS within a certain district, so a synod is a convention of the BISHOPS and ELDERS within a larger district;” and chap. XII, 2, says: “The General Assembly shall consist of an equal delegation of BISHOPS and ELDERS.” Now, a “bishop” is one who has a pastoral care. The question arises whether ministers *without charge* have a right to seats. In fixing the quorums of a presbytery and a synod, it is said: “Any seven *ministers*, &c. ;” and a presbytery is said to consist of “all the *ministers* within a certain district.” So far as these rules go, it might be left in doubt whether “bishops” or “ministers” were the governing title. In Scotland, it is the former. None but pastors have the right to sit in their church courts, except that professors in the universities sit in rotation, as pastors in common of the seminary students. The General Assembly of 1816 decided that “all ministers” are qualified for membership. (See Minutes, p. 615.) But this is a question which cannot be regarded as yet finally settled in the policy of the church.

As respects the other class of members in Presbyterian Church courts, the description of them is that they are “ruling elders.” Only ordained ministers and elders are spiritual officers: and such only can exercise rule in the church. By the “accommodation act” of 1808, between the Presbyterians and Congregationalists, lay delegates from standing committees of Congregational Churches in union with presbyteries, were entitled to

seats as ruling elders. This anomaly was extinguished by the repeal of the accommodation plan in 1873.

SEC. III. ORGANIZATION OF THE JUDICATORY. —

RULE I.—“The moderator shall take the chair precisely at the hour to which the judicatory stands adjourned; shall immediately call the members to order, and, on the appearance of a quorum, shall open the session with prayer.”

RULE II.—“If a quorum be assembled at the hour appointed, and the moderator be absent, the last moderator present shall be requested to take his place, without delay.” In the General Assembly, the last moderator present, even though not a commissioner, takes the chair. (Digest, p. 172.) After calling the roll, and reading the minutes of the last meeting, a new moderator is elected. Nominations are made *viva voce*. Where there is more than one candidate, the voting is by ballot, except in the General Assembly, where it is by calling the roll. Where there are more than two candidates, the election is by plurality. The moderator is, by usage, always a minister, but there is nothing in the constitution to forbid a ruling elder's occupying the office; and, in a few recent instances this has actually been done. (See Form of Gov. : X, 2; XIX, 3.)

Each judicatory has a stated clerk, holding office during the will of the body, and a temporary clerk, chosen at each session. The stated clerk receives a salary, in the General Assembly, of \$100. In synods and presbyteries, of \$10 and upwards. The stated clerk is the custodian of the minutes, and of all records and papers of the judicatory.

Besides these officers, the General Assembly has a “permanent clerk,” whose business it is to draught the

minutes of the body while in session, and see to transcribing, printing, etc. Pay \$3 a day, while engaged in the business of the Assembly. The clerks of the Assembly need not be commissioners to that body. (Digest, p. 176.)

SEC. IV. DUTIES OF THE MODERATOR.—“It is the duty of the moderator to keep order, in accordance with the rules, to hold the attention of the judicatory closely to the matter in hand, to decide promptly all questions of order, and to promote the most rapid and safe prosecution of the business. He may speak to points of order, in preference to other members in his place, and may join in debate, by calling some other member to the chair. He appoints all committees, except the judicatory order otherwise.”

“When the vote is by ballot, the moderator may vote, but in no other case, except when there is a tie. If he then vote aye, the question is carried. If he refuse to vote, it is lost.” In the Assembly of 1798, the moderator, Dr. John Blair Smith, claimed the right to vote, as commissioner from the Presbytery of Albany, and, also, to give the casting vote as moderator. This the Assembly denied him. (Digest, p. 172.)

In order to command the respect and obedience of the judicatory, it is necessary that the moderator should be prompt and resolute in his decisions. His sentence is, indeed, always subject to an appeal; but, in all ordinary cases, even when a vote may be somewhat doubtful, a prompt decision will carry the assent of the judicatory with it. In the dissenting church judicatories, or conventions, of England, the moderator usually gathers the sense of the house during the course of the debate, and gives the decision without putting the question to vote.

A feeble and hesitating moderator throws the body into confusion, and greatly retards the progress of business.

SEC. V. INTRODUCTION OF BUSINESS.—Business may be brought before a judicatory in the following ways :

1. It is the duty of the stated clerk to make out, in advance, a docket containing the business of routine, and any other matter that should regularly come before the body. This docket is to be gone through with, till it is exhausted. 2. Appeals, references, or complaints, may come up from lower courts. 3. Reports of committees. 4. Review of records of lower courts. 5. Original motions. All matters of importance or difficulty, are best referred to some appropriate committee, by which they may be brought in order before the judicatory, as, matters of discipline, to the judicial committee ; questions relating to any proposed action, to the committee of bills and overtures ; interpretation of the constitution, to the committee on the polity of the church, etc.

Any member may bring an item of business before the judicatory on his own responsibility. All motions must be seconded, before they can be entertained, and the mover may be required to reduce any motion to writing. But this applies only to principal motions, and not to such subsidiary motions as are merely designed to aid in disposing of the former, as, to lay on the table, to commit, etc., which are always in one form. All judicial business must be introduced before the close of the second day of the sessions : and any appeal not introduced at the first succeeding meeting of the judicatory appealed to, and before the close of the second day, is

regarded as abandoned, and the original decision is affirmed. (Discipline : III, 11.)

SEC. VI. ORDER OF BUSINESS. — Business may be taken up either in the order of the docket, or by being made the order of the day for a set time, or on casual motions, reports, etc. All business is brought before a judicatory, with a view to action upon it, and no business can be acted on, except under the form of a motion. All appeals, references, overtures, reports of committees, etc., terminate in a motion looking to some action disposing of the same ; and no person is entitled to address a judicatory, except under, or in contemplation of, a motion. In familiar proceedings this rule is often disregarded, but always may be, and usually should be, strictly enforced.

SEC. VII. ALL REPORTS OF COMMITTEES SHOULD BE IN WRITING. — If in full, the regular motion is to accept the report. The effect of this, if passed, is to discharge the committee, and bring the report into the hands of the judicatory. If rejected, it may be in favor of a motion to re-commit the business to the same committee, with or without instructions ; or the committee may report in part, and ask to be continued. On the acceptance of the report, if it be one calling for any action, the next motion is for its adoption. The motion to adopt is always debatable, and it is on this, and not on the motion to accept, that the discussion of the matter involved takes place.

SEC. VIII. PROGRESS OF A MOTION BEFORE A JUDICATORY. — When any motion is before a judicatory, its progress may be promoted, retarded, or finally arrested, by the following methods, viz. : 1. The motion being put to the vote, may be at once rejected, without debate.

2. Before any debate has taken place, the mover may withdraw it, with the consent of the seconder; or, afterwards, by the consent of the judicatory. 3. It may be moved to amend the motion; and, 4. To amend that amendment, but no farther. 5. It may be moved to postpone to a set time; and, 6. To postpone indefinitely. 7. To lay on the table, (*a*) for the present, (*b*) unconditionally. 8. To commit. 9. The previous question. 10. To adjourn.

To these might be added a motion to proceed to the order of the day, but this should be done simply by the decision of the moderator, on the arrival of the hour appointed, without any motion.

SEC. IX. PRIVILEGED QUESTIONS:—“When a question is under debate, no motion shall be received, unless to amend, to commit, to postpone, to lay upon the table, for the previous question, or to adjourn. (Digest, Rule 14.) These are called “privileged questions,” because they have the precedence over any others.

1. The *motion to adjourn* is always in order. Each member of the court may speak upon it once. In the British parliament, also, the motion is debatable, but not in the House of Representatives of the United States.

2. *To lay on the table.* The object of this motion is either to suspend the consideration of a subject, for the time, in order to attend to something else, at the conclusion of which it may again be taken from the table, or, to get rid of it altogether. But this latter use of it is illegitimate, as the end desired is regularly attainable by a different motion, as, for example, by a direct vote to reject, or to postpone indefinitely. The motion to lay on the table was discarded by the General Assembly

(N. S.) of 1851; but was restored by the United General Assembly, in 1871, with the following additional rule: (No. 21.) "A distinction shall be observed between a motion to lay on the table for the present, and a motion to lay on the table unconditionally, viz.: A motion to lay on the table for the present, shall be taken without debate, and, if carried, the effect shall be to place the subject on the docket, and it may be taken up and considered at any subsequent time. A motion to lay on the table unconditionally, shall also be taken without debate, and, if carried in the affirmative, it shall not be in order to take up the subject during the same meeting of the judicatory, without a vote of reconsideration."

3. *To amend.* An amendment may be moved on any motion, and shall be decided before the original motion. An amendment may be amended, but not the second amendment.

4. *To commit.* It is often of great advantage to the prosecution of business, to refer a motion to a committee, who shall bring in some report, or minute, expressive of the sense of the judicatory. It may be accompanied with instructions, or otherwise.

5. *To postpone*, either indefinitely, or to a set day. An indefinite postponement excludes the question for the rest of the sessions. (Rule 20.) "A subject which has been indefinitely postponed shall not be again called up, during the same sessions, unless by consent of three-fourths of the members who were present at the decision."

6. *The previous question.* The object of the previous question in the British parliament, from which we have taken it, is to suppress a bill which, for any reason, is objectionable. It is said to have been first introduced

by Sir Henry Vane, the elder, in 1604. It is called "previous," because the motion before the house being for the adoption of a certain bill, a member moves a resolution *previous to that*, viz., that the main question be put — i. e., that it *shall be* put at some time, his object being to obtain a negative decision, and thus turn the question at once and forever out of the house; for, obviously, if the house decide that the question shall not be put at all, there could be no debate upon it. If, contrary to the mover's intention, his motion be carried, then the debate may proceed; that is, the house decides that it *will* consider and vote upon the resolution.

In this country, on the other hand, the object of the previous question is not to suppress any bill or motion, but to suppress debate upon it, and bring the house immediately to a vote on the question before it: but what that question is, is differently interpreted in different deliberative assemblies. In the legislature, and in political conventions of the State of New York, the previous question, if sustained, arrests debate, sweeps away all pending amendments, etc., and brings the house to an immediate vote on the original motion. In the United States Senate the previous question is unknown; but in the House of Representatives its effect is to arrest debate, and bring the house to a direct vote upon pending amendments, and then upon the main question. The form of the motion is, "that the main question be now put, and the object of the mover is to obtain an affirmative decision.

In Presbyterian Church judicatories, down to 1835; the previous question was in this form: "*Shall the main question be now put?*" If decided in the affirmative, the debate on the main question might *proceed*. If in the

negative, the effect was to arrest debate, and produce an indefinite postponement. This rule was designed to be the same in its effect as that in the British parliament, but the inconsiderate introduction of the word "*now*" gave it a character of contradiction and absurdity, viz. : If the motion that the main question be now put prevailed, then the main question was *not* to be put, but the discussion was to go on.

By the General Assembly of 1835, the rule was altered, as follows: "The previous question shall be in this form, 'Shall the main question be now put?' and when demanded by a majority of the members present, shall be put, without debate. If decided in the affirmative, the main question, that is, the original motion, shall be immediately put, without debate. If in the negative, the debate may proceed."

This change removed the inconsistency in the rule, as it before stood, and made the operation of the previous question the same as in the State of New York; that is, it suppressed all subsidiary motions, and brought the house to vote directly on the original question.

The General Assembly of 1851, altered the rule into its present shape, in which it was approved and adopted by the united Assembly of 1871, as follows: "The previous question shall be put in this form, '*Shall the main question be now put?*' It shall only be admitted when demanded by a majority of the members present, and its effect shall be to put a stop to all debate, and bring the body to a direct vote, first, upon the motion to commit the subject under consideration, if such a motion shall have been made. Second, if the motion to commit does not prevail, upon pending amendments; and, lastly, upon the main question."

The previous question is a measure of self protection, by a judicatory, against the pertinacity of individual members, when, in the opinion of a majority, a subject has been sufficiently discussed. Regarded as a "gag law," it is seldom looked upon with much favor among us. The end designed may, usually, be attained by other methods, as, by sufficiently energetic and persistent cries of "question!"

SEC. X. IN FILLING BLANKS, the vote is to be taken, first, on the longest time, and the largest number. (Rule 33.) In the British parliament, the rule is the longest time and the smallest number. In the Congress of the United States, a bill might be introduced, for example, to empower the president to raise 20,000 volunteers, for the protection of the frontier, for two years. The opposition might attempt to defeat this measure absolutely, by some of the motions already mentioned. Failing in this, they might attempt to limit the grant as much as possible, moving, e. g., to reduce the number of men to 15,000, 10,000, or 5,000; and the time to 18, 12, or 6 months. The vote must be taken in succession on the largest number and the longest time.

SEC. XI. RULES REGULATING DEBATE.— "On questions of order, adjournment, postponement, or commitment, no member shall speak more than once." (Rule 13.) On all other questions each member may speak twice, but not oftener, without the consent of the judicatory. In ordinary conversational discussion this rule is disregarded: but in all formal or earnest debate should be strictly enforced. Any church judicatory, however, may go into "interlocutory session," corresponding to the parliamentary "committee of the whole," in which the

members may freely converse together, without the formalities which attend ordinary debate. (Rule 38.)

If more than one member rise to speak at the same time, the member who is most distant from the moderator's chair shall speak first.

If a motion under debate contains several parts, any two members may have it divided, and the question taken separately, on each part.

"It is indispensable that members of ecclesiastical judicatories maintain great gravity and dignity, while judicially convened, (i. e., when not in interlocutory session) that they attend closely, in their speeches, to the subject under consideration, and avoid prolix and desultory harangues; and when they deviate from the subject, it is the privilege of any member, and the duty of the moderator to call them to order." (Rule 24.)

SEC. XII. READING THE MINUTES. — The minutes of the last meeting of the judicatory shall be presented at the commencement of its sessions, and, if necessary, read and corrected. (Rule 12.)

SEC. XIII. RECONSIDERATION. — "A question shall not be again called up and reconsidered at the same sessions of the judicatory at which it has been decided, unless by the consent of two-thirds of the members who were present at the decision, and unless the motion to reconsider be made and seconded by persons who voted with the majority." (Rule 22.) The words "*meeting*" and "*sessions*" both mean *the whole time during which the judicatory sits*. "Session" means the meeting of a single day, which is interrupted only by a recess. At the close of each day's "*session*," the judicatory adjourns till next day. At the close of its "*sessions*," it adjourns finally, till the next regular or stated meeting. In the

records of the old Synod of New York and Philadelphia, the meeting was commonly called a "*sederunt*." The cabalistic letters U. P. P. S. Q. S. are often found after the place and date of meeting, i. e., *ubi post preces sederunt qui supra*.

SEC. XIV. ON TAKING THE VOTE.—“Every motion should be distinctly repeated by the moderator, before being put. If there is any room for doubt, as to the effect of the vote, he should explain what it will be.” The motion should be put in brief and simple terms, thus: All those in favor of the motion will say *aye*; contrary minded will say *no*.

“When the moderator has commenced taking the vote, no further debate, or remark, shall be admitted, unless there has evidently been a mistake, in which case it shall be rectified, and the moderator shall re-commence taking the vote. (Rule 34.)

“Members ought not, without weighty reasons, to decline voting, as this practice might leave the decision of very interesting questions to a small proportion of the judicatory. Silent members, unless excused from voting, must be regarded as acquiescing with the majority.” (Rule 30.)

SEC. XV. THE CLOSING ACTS OF A CHURCH JUDICATORY, above a church session, are reading and correcting the minutes of the last session, prayer, and the apostolic benediction, by the moderator, who then declares the judicatory adjourned, to meet on a set day, or, as the case may be, at the call of the moderator.

NOTE TO SEC. II. ON THE QUORUM OF A SYNOD. — “The quorum of a synod is seven ministers, provided that not more than three belong to one presbytery.”

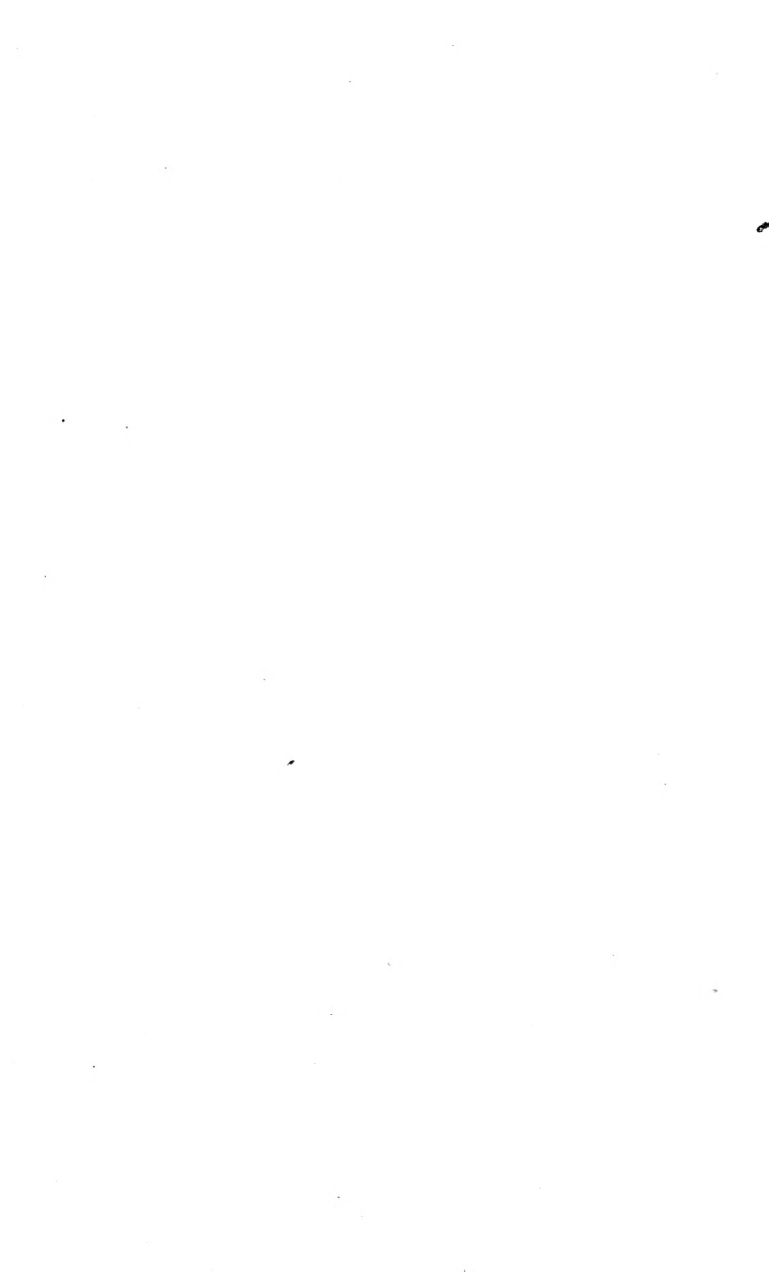
The intent of this rule was to secure the presence of

ministers from, at least, three presbyteries, in order to constitute a synod. If it had simply fixed the quorum at "seven ministers," without adding the proviso, the entire seven might, in some cases, belong to one presbytery. By the proviso, not more than three of the seven must belong to one presbytery; but the rule directs nothing as to the distribution of the other four. They may belong to four different presbyteries, one to each, or, two to one, and one to each of two others, or three to one, and one to a third. The whole seven might even belong to seven different presbyteries. In the case of the Synod of Philadelphia, referred to, there were four presbyteries represented, of which two had one each, one had two, and the other (Chester) had thirteen ministers.

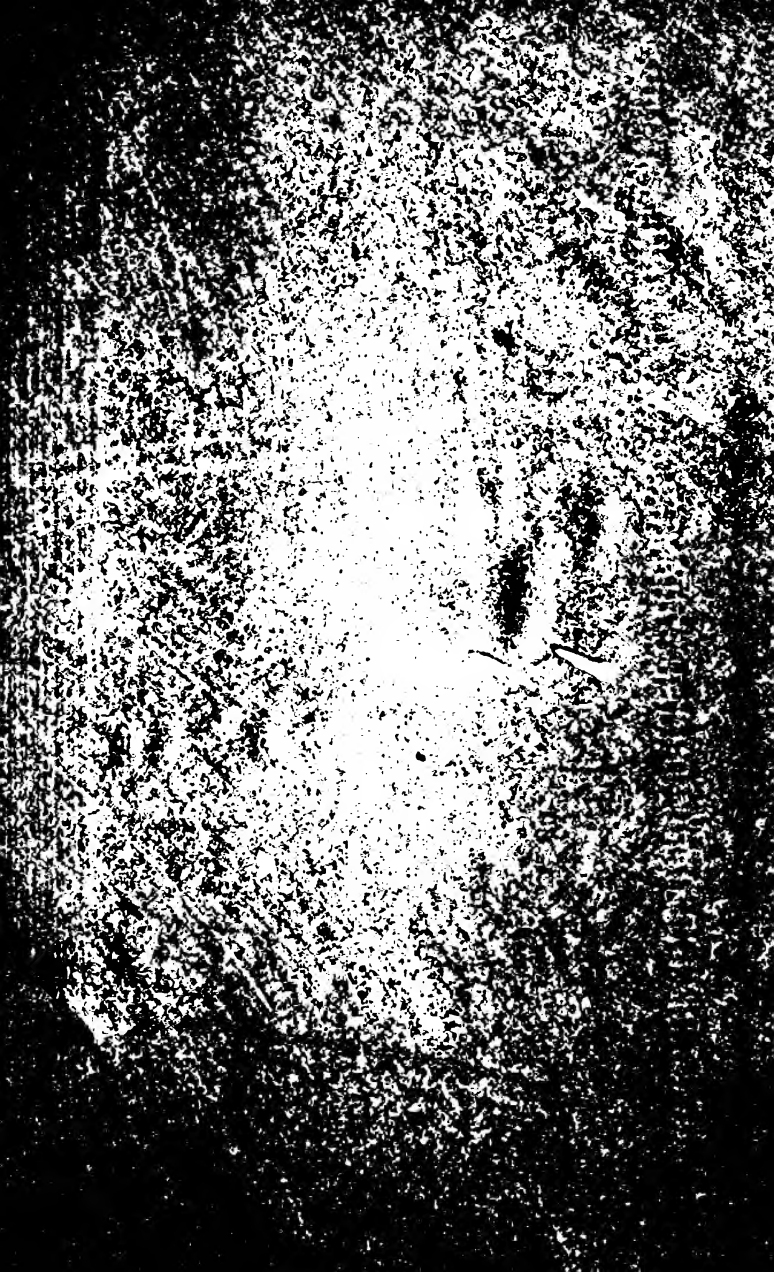
Now, inasmuch as the rule directs that, *in the case of a bare quorum*, not more than three of the seven shall belong to one presbytery, it was inferred that, in this instance, where *ten more* than a quorum were present, the synod was in no condition to act, since thirteen out of the seventeen members were from one presbytery. If the Presbytery of Chester had had only *three* ministers present, no one will deny that there would have been a legitimate quorum. How should the excess of ten ministers from that presbytery vitiate this fact? The error of the Synod of Philadelphia seems to have arisen from their supposing that the object of the rule was to prevent any one presbytery having a majority of the whole number present; whereas, its whole intent was to secure the attendance of some minister, or ministers, from, at least, three presbyteries. Suppose, at the hour of meeting, the Synod of Chester had had only three ministers; of course, there would have been a working quorum.

Would the arrival of ten other members from that presbytery, an hour afterwards, have destroyed the quorum? On the other hand, the withdrawal of the single representative of one of the other two presbyteries would have had that effect, and have obliged the synod to suspend any further action, till the quorum was restored.

The Synod of Philadelphia, therefore, *did* have an actual quorum at York, on the day mentioned, and was competent, not merely to adjourn, but to attend to all synodical business.









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